

Loving God with Our Minds

R.C. Sproul

The human mind is one of the most incredible aspects of creation. It is more powerful than the largest supercomputer and can solve great problems and make great discoveries. That makes the noetic effects of sin especially tragic.

The noetic effects of sin describe the impact of sin upon the nous—the mind—of fallen humanity. The faculty of thinking, with which we reason, has been seriously disturbed and corrupted by the fall. In our natural, unregenerate state, there is something dramatically wrong with our minds. As a consequence of our suppressing the knowledge of God in our sin, we have been given over to a debased mind (Rom. 1:28).

It's terrible to have a reprobate mind, a mind that now in its fallen condition doesn't have a scintilla of desire to love God. But that is the kind of mind we chose for ourselves in Adam, so in our natural fallen condition, there is nothing more repugnant to our minds than the love of God. While we remain unregenerate, we have such an antipathy to loving God by nature that we choke at the very thought of Christ's command to love God with our minds (Matt. 22:37).

Our minds have been corrupted by sin, but that does not mean our ability to think has been annihilated. The best pagan thinkers can still spot errors of logic without being born again. You don't have to be regenerate in order to get a Ph.D. in mathematics. The fallen mind retains the ability to follow formal argumentation to a degree, but that ends when discussion about the character of God begins because that is where bias is so severe and hostility so great that many of the most brilliant people stumble. In fact, if a person begins their thinking by refusing to acknowledge what they know to be true—that there is a God—then the more brilliant they are, the further away from God their reasoning will lead them.

Any consideration of the human mind, therefore, must begin with the understanding that by nature the mind does not love God at all, and it will not love God at all unless and until God the Holy Spirit changes its disposition immediately and sovereignly to set the affections on Him. Regeneration is the necessary condition for loving God with our minds. Without it, there is no love of God. So, we must get rid of this idea that's pervasive in the evangelical world that unbelieving people are seekers of God. The natural man does not seek after God. Unregenerate people who look like they are seeking after God, as Thomas Aquinas said, are seeking the benefits only God can give, not God Himself.

Note, however, that all of the mind's antipathy toward God is not eliminated the minute we're born again. After regeneration, for the first time in our lives, we are disposed to the things of God rather than against them. We are given a desire to have God in our thinking rather than despising the idea of having God in our thinking. But the residual effects and the power of our fallen human condition remain and are not eliminated entirely until we're glorified in heaven. The whole pilgrimage of the Christian life in our sanctification, then, is one in which we are seeking to love God more and more with our minds. Cont. page 2...



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Jonathan Edwards once said that seeking after God is the main business of the Christian. And how do we seek after God? By pursuing the renewal of our minds. We don't get the love of God from a hip replacement, a knee replacement, or even a heart transplant. The only way we can be transformed is with a renewed mind (Rom. 12:1-2). A renewed mind results from diligently pursuing the knowledge of God. If we despise doctrine, if we despise knowledge, that probably indicates that we're still in that fallen condition where we don't want God in our thinking. True Christians want God to dominate their thinking and to fill their minds with ideas of Himself.

Isn't it strange that our Lord says that we are called to love God with our minds? We don't usually speak of love in terms of an intellectual activity. In fact, most of our understanding of love in our secular culture is described in passive categories. We speak not of jumping in love but falling in love, like it was an accident.

But real love is not an involuntary thing. It is something we do purposefully based on our knowledge of the person we love. Nothing can be in the heart that is not first in the mind. And if we want to have an experience of God directly where we bypass the mind, we're on a fool's errand. It can't happen. We might increase emotion, entertainment, or excitement, but we're not going to increase the love of God because we can't love what we don't know. A mindless Christianity is no Christianity at all.

If we want to love God more, we have to know Him more deeply. And the more we search the Scriptures, and the more we focus our minds' attention on who God is and what He does, the more we understand just a tiny little bit more about Him and the more our souls break out in flame. We have a greater ardor to honor Him. The more we understand God with our minds, the more we love Him with our minds.

To love God with our minds is to hold Him in high esteem, to think about Him with reverence and with adoration. The more we love God with our minds, the more we'll be driven to do that other thing that is alien to us in our fallen condition, namely, to worship Him. To pursue God with our minds simply for intellectual enjoyment and without the ultimate purpose of loving and worshiping Him is to miss what it means to love Him with our minds. True knowledge of God always bears fruit in greater love for God and a greater desire to praise Him. The more we know Him, the more glorious He will appear to us. And the more glorious He appears to us, the more inclined we will be to praise Him, to honor Him, to worship Him, and to obey Him.
--Submitted by Elizabeth Dean

Session Summary-August 2023

We have a couple of candidates for our transitional pastor position, so we are engaging in the interview process with both of them. Please keep this in your prayers.

The Session has approved expanding the hours of Sue Bolander who will be helping with Youth Activities this Fall.

As a leadership team, we want to seek ways to revitalize our church. At the end of February, we held a leadership retreat for Elders, Deacons, Trustees, and Staff with PIR Ministries which we found refreshing. We would like to meet with you to inform you of some of the ideas and tools we learned and to hear from you about your sense of where Brookdale stands as a church today. An outline of what we discussed at that retreat is available at the welcome center.

Elders have been assigned to the small groups at Brookdale and will be contacting your group leader to set up a time to meet with your group about this information. If you do not hear from an elder in the next few weeks, please let me or another elder know.

We realize not everyone is in a small group, so we want to also give you an opportunity to hear about this information and to get your feedback as well. Since there will not be Sunday School the next two weeks, Elders will be available to meet in Classroom A next week August 27th at 9:30 and on September 3rd at 9:30 the following Sunday. We are limiting the number of attendees at these meetings to 15 each, so we ask that you sign up at the welcome center. If there is not space for you or if those times do not work for you, please sign up on the list to attend an alternative meeting, and we will let you know as other meeting opportunities are scheduled. It is very important that you sign-up if you are not in a small group. We want everyone to participate.

We are in need of a few quality people serve on our personnel committee. Please let Elizabeth Dean know if you are interested.

We are beginning our nomination process for church officers, several of our leaders are unable to continue to serve because of term limits. If you are asked, please prayerfully consider serving in this important way. We all need to pull together to further the Gospel and build the Kingdom at and through Brookdale Church!

Going Local Mission Trip

Sue Bolander

For three full days students and adults served the St. Joseph community. Our day began at 7:30am and ended at 9:00pm. We partnered with No Hunger Summer (packing 1,000 lunches), Second Harvest, Mount Mora, St. Joseph Museum, Pivotal Point, CarePortal, Noyes Home, Brookdale SMC and Sleep in Heavenly Peace. We also hosted a neighborhood cookout at Sherwood Park with hotdogs, games and a giant inflatable slide, thank you deacons for your help. The families that showed up were so grateful to Brookdale for hosting the event.

Each day started with breakfast (thanks Corey), devotions and then off to our work sites. No Hunger Summer provided our lunches and wonderful volunteers provided dinner. The evenings were filled with activities that included ice cream, swimming and the cookout, but I'm sure the highlight was playing Romans and Christians in the church. It was so much fun and very intense. The theme for the week was Storyline. The devotions guided students each day into true stories from the Bible where they learned about real people who met Jesus. They were able to dive deeper into God's story and see how Jesus' story might intersect with their story.

Our local mission trip wouldn't have happened without the help of our awesome volunteers. So many helped prepare meals for the students, offered their pool for an evening swim, chauffeured the students, and invested in our 18 students who participated. Seeing God work in the lives of students and watching them not only serve with joy, but serve and help each other. The older students were so kind to the younger students and included them in all the activities. I know God was pleased.

“For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.” Hebrews 6:10



Middle School and High School Students
Brookdale Church - SMC
**YOUTH GROUP
KICKOFF**
Sunday, September 10 - 6pm-8pm

Book Club



Brookdale's Book Club, met August 11th at Doris and Lisa Wyckoff's home.

Susie Thornton provided refreshment that compliments summer time: pound cake with fresh fruit topped with strawberry whip cream and of course, raspberry lemonade; all yummy and refreshing. It was perfect for our August get together.

This summer's reading was highlighted by a variety of books from our own church library. Below you will see a list of books read this summer that you can also check out from the church library.

Club review are also included:

>Two by author Susan Finkbeiner. A Cup of Dust and A Trail of Crumbs which were part of a Dust Bowl series that shared stories of a young girl Pearl's life during the depression and living in Oklahoma during the dust bowl. Doris and Lisa Wyckoff, Julie Schmitt, Barbara Colby and Susie Thornton read these. Susie is eager to finish the rest of the series.

Three books from the author Chris Fabry. These are stand-alone novels but do all take place in West Virginia mountains.

>Catherin Hague read June Bug which brought her to tears at times of a child who was left by her mom and raised by a kind vagabond stranger, In a trailer. Eventually reunited with her grandmother. (Lisa, our resident English major) said that the story was inspired by Les Miserables. Catherine highly recommended it.

>A Piece of the Moon also by Chris Fabry was read by Renee Lawhon, Doris and Lisa Wyckoff and Julie Schmitt. If you like country western music, humor, a treasure hunt with Biblical clues, along with the heart and soul of a small mountain community that is built on second chances. You'll enjoy reading this book.

>Dogwood. another novel by Fabry, was read by Lisa Wyckoff. The story starts with a car wreck and dives into the implications from the wreck. Through twists and turns, surprises, and spiritual lessons the author tells a story of restoration.

>Under the Bayou Moon by Valerie Fraser Luesse was a sweet story of finding your passion in the background of the Louisiana bayou. Teacher Ellie Field leaves her home to go to the bayou near New Orleans and discovers her strengths and passion as she is faced with prejudice, 50 students, limited resources, mystery and love. The writing places you within the sights, sound and flow of the bayou. Lisa Wyckoff, Julie Schmitt

>The Way it Should Be by Christina Suzanne Nelson. Patti Jones and Julie Schmitt read this story of estranged twins with complicated family dynamics. Their lives Went down different paths but both shared a background that influenced them. Heartbreak, hope, broken lives on the street, compassion all found in this novel. Julie's favorite part was how the author used journaling to understand the human heart in a world of hurting.

>As the month of July moved along our reading expanded to include a Terri Blackstock novel Private Justice. Doris Wyckoff and Julie Schmitt are both lovers of a good suspense novel. You'll find many of Blackstock's novels deal with faith, fear, small-town relationships, romance, human nature and redemption. You can't go wrong with any of her books and they can be found in Brookdale's Church library.

Book club meets in September on Thursday, September 7th at 2pm in the home of Doris and Lisa Wyckoff. Laura Weckerlin will be serving refreshments and we'd love to have you join us as we discuss the August book which is a classic • Fahrenheit 451. By Ray Bradbury. You can get a copy of the book from Doris.
Julie Schmitt

Fish Fry Fundraiser



Jill and Steve Blazer welcomed Brookdale after church August 6th, to their home for a fish fry fundraiser for the Guatemala Mission Trip. It was a huge success. There was fresh caught catfish, baked salmon, many sides, and desserts. Several attended. Sue Bolander brought water games for the youth. The Blazer's have a large fish pond. People were able to walk out on the dock and feed fish. If you are interested in helping or going on the mission trip check for information at the Welcome Center.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDIES

FALL 2023

🍂 ALL ARE WELCOME-OPEN TO NEWCOMERS 🍂

<h3 style="margin: 0;">Monday</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10:00 am in the church library. Continuing with 1 Corinthians. Contact Julie Schmitt 816-244-4041 for more Information 	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Wednesday</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10:00 am, beginning Sept. 6th in the church library. Continuing study of Matthew. Contact Janeen Burnham 816-390-4399 for more information • 6:00 pm at the home of Julie Schmitt. Continuing the study of 1 Corinthians. Contact Julie Schmitt 816-244-4041 for more information. 	<h3 style="margin: 0;">Thursday</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9:30 am Bible Study Fellowship, beginning September 14th in the fellowship hall. This year's study is the Gospel of John. Contact Nancy Savely 816-714-0834 for more information. Workbook will be provided.
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September Birthdays

- 1 - Leyton Furlong
- 3 - Carter Corcoran
- 5 - Mark Austin, Matthew Bolander
- 6 - Max Richter
- 9 - Harold Wyble
- 10 - Jack Poggemiller
- 15 - Zoe Bryant
- 20 - Stan Hall

27 - Bill Addington, Randy Dudik

29 - Vernalee Carter

October

- 1 - Cheyenne Nightingale
- 2 - Sol Bryant, Dick Crowl, Connie Lemon
- 3 - Susie Yardley
- 4 - Sarah Burnham, Ryan Swank
- 5 - Dan Schwabe

Family Notes...

Dear Brookdale Family,

Thank you for the love poured out during this time of great sorrow. Thank you for your words of comfort and your sustaining prayers. A special thanks to those who filled the chairs during the funeral service. Your faces were beautiful to us.-Diane and Randy Dudik

Brookdale Family,

Thank you so much for the lovely flowers but mostly for the prayers for our son Todd. He fought a courageous battle with cancer for 4 years. We appreciate each and every prayer. Love and Blessings- Joe and Gayle Sollars.

On behalf of Richard Hixson, I would like to thank the Brookdale Church for helping pay for his hearing aids. Your generous support is very much appreciated. Brookdale Church members are wonderful ambassadors for the Lord. -Joyce Clibon

Fall/ Winter Sunday School Classes

Beginning Sept 10th

2nd Corinthians – Classroom A, 9:15 am

Come join us for the study of Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church. In many ways the problems of the Corinthian church are the same issues the modern American church faces today. Come join us as we explore how Jesus is the best answer to our problems regardless of the century we live in.

Judges/Ruth – Church Library, 9:15 am

This is the 350 year story of the Judges and Ruth. The people would prosper and forget God and do what was right in their own eyes, then God would bring calamity to his people, they would repent, and God would restore his people through a Judge. Come with us as we look at the Cycle of Judges, and see how Faithful God is to his people and how he sent the ULTIMATE PERFECT JUDGE to truly save his people.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 6:30 Mens Bible Study	2 10:00 Dance Fit
3 Communion 10:30 Worship	4 Labor Day	5 6:30 Men's Ministry 5:30 Dance Fit 6:30 Deacons	6 6:30 Men's Prayer Break- fast 10:00 Women's Bible St. 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Women's Bible Study	7 10:00 Grietshare 2:00 Book Club at Doris Wykcoff's house 6:00 Grietshare	8 6:30 Mens Bible Study Women's Retreat Weekend	9 10:00 Dance Fit
10 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 6:00 Youth Women's Retreat Weekend	11 10:00am Women's Bible Study 2:00 Bible Study 5:15 Finance	12 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Trustees 7:00 Square Dance	13 6:30 Men's Prayer Break- fast 11:00 Daytimers 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Prayer Night	14 9:30 BSF Starts 10:00 Grietshare 6:00 Grietshare	15 6:30 Men's Bible Study	16 10:00 Dance Fit
17 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship All Church Picnic 6:00 Youth	18 10:00am Women's Bible Study	19 5:30 Dance Fit 6:30 Session 7:00 Square Dance	20 6:30 Men's Prayer Break- fast 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Women's Bible Study 7:00 Prayer	21 Haven House Food Kitchen 9:30 BSF 6:00 Grietshare	22 6:30 Men's Bible study	23 10:00 Dance Fit
24 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 6:00 Youth	25 10:00am Women's Bible Study 2:00pm Bible Study	26 5:30 Dance Fit 7:00 Square Dance	27 6:30 Men's Prayer Break- fast 11:00 Daytimers 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Women's Bible Study	28 9:30 BSF 10:00 Grietshare 6:00 Grietshare	29 6:30 Men's Bible study	30 10:00 Dance Fit



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*Brookdale Church is called to
bring the beauty of the Gospel
to the brokenness of life.*



**MEN'S
•CAMP OUT•**
OCTOBER 6, 7 AND 8TH
INDIAN CAVE STATE PARK
(NEAR FALLS CITY, NEBRASKA)

CAMPING, HIKING, HANGING OUT
\$40 COVERS FOOD AND CAMPING

**SIGN UP AT THE
WELCOME CENTER**

HI, BROOKDALE! SAVE THE DATE!

**ALL
CHURCH
PICNIC**



When: September 17
Where: Bartlett Park
Hosted by: The Deacons