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**YOU HAVE  
THE MIND  
Of Christ**

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# THE MIND OF CHRIST

In 1 Corinthians 2:16 it tells us that we have the mind of Christ. Does everyone have the mind of Christ? No, only Christians. That is, those who are born again of the Word (1 Peter 1:23) and the Spirit (John 3:6,7). But for those who are born again, we do have the mind of Christ in our new spirit, where the fullness of the Godhead dwells. That doesn't mean, just because we have the mind of Christ that we are using the mind of Christ in our daily lives. It means that the mind of Christ is available to us at anytime we decide to permit the Holy Spirit to take control in our lives. If we walk after the flesh the mind of Christ will not benefit us in any way. It is only when we walk after the Spirit that the mind of Christ operates from within us.

When the apostle Paul mentioned that we have the mind of Christ, he had just said before that in 1 Corinthians 2:14; **“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”** The natural man cannot discern the things of the Spirit. The natural man is the man of the flesh, also called “the outward man, the old man, etc.” In 2 Corinthians 4:16 it says, **“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.”** The natural man still wants to walk after the flesh, whereas; the inward man wants to walk after the Spirit. The apostle Paul described his problems with the natural man, the outward man, in Romans 7:14-25. In verse 14, the apostle Paul said **“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”** The word carnal in the Greek means “unregenerate - fleshly.” If Paul was unregenerate - fleshly in his natural mind, then we must be the same in the natural mind. Paul, an apostle of the LORD Jesus Christ, still had a major problem with his natural mind, his outward man of the flesh. He described his problem in verses 18 through 23,

**For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.**

**For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.**

**Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**

**I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.**

**For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

**But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

Yes, we have the mind of Christ, but that doesn't mean everything we do is in agreement with Christ. We have the mind of Christ, but if we don't use it, the natural mind of the flesh will take control of our lives. We will be just like those who are of the world, “not born again in Christ Jesus.”

Most Spirit-filled Christians today, are like the church that was at Corinth, they are still carnally minded. The apostle did his best to operate from the mind of Christ rather than the natural mind of the flesh. Paul even went on in 1 Corinthians 3:1, saying, **“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.”** Those who are babes in Christ are still carnal. He then explained what he meant by babes in Christ in 1

Corinthians 3:3, saying, **“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”**

Before we continue from here, let us look at some of what was happening among the Corinthians. Are not these same things happening among the Christians today?

In Chapter one of first Corinthians, the apostle Paul emphasized the preaching of the Cross. How that preaching of the Cross to the wise of this world was foolishness. And that to those who are chosen of God (but became religious, self-righteous, operating from their natural minds); the preaching of the Cross was a stumbling block.

In Chapter two of first Corinthians, the apostle Paul compared his coming to the Corinthians to the others, as one who came with the wisdom of God, and not the wisdom of man.

We see very few like the apostle Paul among the churches today. Multitudes have gone to the wisdom of men, rather than the wisdom of God. All throughout the epistles of first and second Corinthians, Paul addressed the issues that are prevalent today among many Christian churches.

There are those who are so super-spiritual that they are beyond the Written Word and they live by their spiritual experiences. There are those who raise themselves up as though they are God. There are those who raise up others, seeking to glorify their position among others. There are those who Paul called “angels of light.” For the most part, they are babes in Christ, for there is still envying, strife, and divisions among them.

What should someone do if they find themselves among those who are partakers of their deeds? Remember the LORD our God, for He is merciful, righteous, and long suffering. He will abundantly pardon us if we come to Him.

There needs to be a change made. We must repent, turn from our ways, confess our sins, and receive of the LORD restoration among the sanctified. We must come out from among those who are not walking in the Light, separate ourselves, for God is Holy. He is not willing that any should perish, but come to the true knowledge of His Son and follow Him. The parable of the prodigal son in Luke, Chapter fifteen is an example for every Christian who has gone astray. Take his example, and return to our Father’s house. He will abundantly pardon and receive all who come with a repentant heart. Just as the Word says in Revelation 22:17, **“the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”**

As Christians, we need a better understanding of what is meant by “we have the mind of Christ.” When we became born again of the Word and the Spirit we received the mind of Christ within our new creature “in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17). The mind of Christ operates “from our spirit,” as the spirit wills, not as our natural mind wills. Just as praying in the Spirit operates from our spirit, not our natural mind. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:14, **“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my**

**spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.”** It was not his natural mind that was doing the praying, it was his spirit that was doing the praying.

Christians have two lives. They have “Zoe” which is God’s eternal life, born again of the Spirit and the Word (John 3:6, 1 Peter 1:23). Christians also still have “psuche,” which is natural life, born of the flesh.

Zoe operates from the new created spirit of man, and “psuche” operates from the natural mind of man. These two are different, and they do not agree. Most of the time, when the natural mind is in control we are walking after the flesh, but when we put the spiritual mind in control we walk after the Spirit. We are told to **“walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh”** (Rom. 8:1-8).

Being that we are told to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh, then it is possible for us to walk after the Spirit rather than the flesh. God does not tell us to do something we cannot do. But, how do we walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh?

As we renew our natural mind on the Word of God (Rom. 12:2), we find that the Word of God and the Spirit of God always agree. In 1 John 5:7, it tells us that **“the Word and the Spirit are One.”** Therefore, if they are One, then they must always agree. Not only is the Word and the Spirit One, but they are also One with the Father, therefore, **“the Word and the Spirit and the Father all agree.”** When we live according to the Word of God we are in effect walking in agreement with the Spirit of God.

We cannot do this of our natural ability, therefore, Jesus explained in John 4:24, saying, **“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”** (NKJV). In actuality, a better understanding of this verse would be **“God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Holy Spirit can people worship him as he really is.”** What it all comes down to is mentioned in Zechariah 4:6, when the LORD spoke through the prophet Zechariah concerning the rebuilding of the temple. He said, **“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”** God wants to work in our lives, “by His Spirit,” not by our natural minds. God wants to use our lives for His glory, by Him working through us. We are only to be vessels for His glory.

When we understand John 4:24, we can see why in Ephesians 6:18 it says, **“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. . .”** The natural man cannot worship God by the power of His Spirit, only the spirit of man can do that. This is a part of the New Covenant only, in the Old Covenant they could not do this.

It’s very helpful to understand that “we are a new creature in Christ” if we are born again of the Word and the Spirit. We were in Adam, but now that we are born again we are in Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:22, it says, **“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”** If we are in Christ, then we are no longer in Adam. Being we are in Christ, we have eternal life. Those who have eternal life will spend eternity in heaven, those who do not have eternal life “when they die on this earth” will spend eternity in hell.

Praise God, that we will not spend eternity in hell, but rather with Him in heaven. It's not because of what we did, it's because of what God did for us in Jesus. **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (2 Cor. 5:21). Then, after Jesus arose again from the dead, **“He added to the Church daily, such as should be saved”** (Acts. 2:47). We were added to the body of Christ when we were born again. Now, it's up to us to “renew our natural mind” on the Word of God that we might walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

If we want to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh we must renew our natural minds on the Word of God (not on the words of men). There are many religious organizations in the world today, calling themselves Christians. That does not make them Christians. What makes a person a Christian is the new birth, being born again of the Word and the Spirit.

The next thing after being born again is the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,5,8). Jesus said “we should” be baptized in the Holy Spirit. In Mark 16:17 Jesus said, **“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.”** If we refuse the baptism in the Holy Spirit because some religious person said we don't need the baptism or some other religious organization said it is not for today; we will let the devil rob us of one of the greatest blessings God has to offer His Children.

Without the Baptism in the Holy Spirit we cannot walk after the Spirit, and we will continue to walk after the flesh all the days of our life here on earth. We need the baptism in the Holy Spirit to help us do the will of God.

Once we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit it is very important to take advantage of every opportunity we have to spend time with the Holy Spirit in the Word and in praying in tongues. It's by spending time in the Word and in praying in tongues that we will grow in wisdom and knowledge of the will of God for our lives.

The mind of Christ operates by the Holy Spirit from within our spirit. The word “Christ” means “anointed One, or anointed.” It's by the anointing that abides in us that we can operate by the mind of Christ and not the natural mind of man. We cannot do the will of God unless we permit God to work in our lives and through our lives by His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God always agree, thereby we can know if it is the Holy Spirit or another spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 2:16, it says, **“For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”** No one knows the mind of the LORD, insomuch as that we can instruct Him. **“But, we have the mind of Christ”!**

How can we know if someone is operating by the mind of Christ? Philippians 2:3-11 says, **Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.**

**Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.**

**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:  
Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:  
But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was  
made in the likeness of men:  
And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto  
death, even the death of the cross.  
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above  
every name:  
That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in  
earth, and things under the earth;  
And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the  
Father.**

If we are born again of the Word and the Spirit, we have the mind of Christ. Christ dwells in us, in our new created Spirit. From within our spirit, God reveals the mysteries of spiritual things (1 Cor. 14:2); and operates in all the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7-11). From within our spirit, God directs, leads, guides, comforts, and teaches us. Our personal lives are directed by God from within us; by the anointing that abides in us. In 1 John 2:27 it says, **“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”** If we abide in this anointing within us we have access to “the mind of Christ” within us.

The mind of Christ operates in total agreement with the written Word of God. It brings us into fellowship with the Father and the Son (1 John 1:1-10). When we have fellowship with the Father and the Son we do not walk in darkness; we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; neither do we walk after the flesh. When we operate by the mind of Christ within our spirit, we walk after the Holy Spirit and not after the flesh.

We all came out of darkness; where the works of the flesh did manifest in our lives. We lived according to the course of this world, controlled by the prince of the power of the air (the demonic forces that control the works of the flesh). Ephesians 2:2 tells us, **“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”** This was our lifestyle. We did not know any better, therefore we lived like the rest of the world. Not that we indulged in horrible sins of the flesh; but that we did not walk by faith, but instead “we walked by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). The mind of Christ does not walk by sight, it walks by faith!

Yet, we are still in this world. We know the ways of the world, because at one time we lived by the ways of the world. But as Christians, we are told, not to live by the ways of this world, but live unto God in the spirit.

We have a choice, how we will live; after the flesh or after the Spirit. Which one will we

choose? Yet, when we choose to live after the Spirit, we will find ourselves in great desire to go back to the ways of the flesh. Is that desire from God? No, not according to the Scriptures. Satan is behind the desires of the flesh and we need to be aware of the fact that we are between two opinions; to walk after the flesh or walk after the Spirit.

Our decisions in this life should be based only, “upon the Word of God.” To do the will of God, we must have God involved. We cannot “of our own ability” serve God. Without the help of God, we are in this world, without hope, and without God (Eph. 2:12). God is on one side and Satan is on the other side; we are in-between. If we side with God, we have the power of God to help us. If we side with the devil, his power is there to control us. We are not in total control of our lives. Unless we put God in control, Satan will blind our minds (2 Cor. 4:4). We will be deceived and he will lead us into destruction.

When Christians think they are in total control of their natural mind, they have been deceived. We do not have total control of our natural mind; therefore, the Scripture tells us, “walk after the Spirit.” When we walk after the Spirit we put the Holy Spirit in control of our natural mind. When the Holy Spirit is in control of our natural mind, we are not in control and neither is the devil. If the Holy Spirit is not in control of our natural mind the devil is and we don’t know it, neither do we understand it. Don’t ever think you have complete control of your natural mind, if you do, you will be deceived.

In Mark 5, it tells us about a man who was possessed by a legion of demons. Jesus cast out the demons and Mark 5:15 says, “**And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.**” After the demons were cast out, this man was in his “**right mind.**” If we study the Scriptures closely we will find that whenever a person is not in their right mind there is some sort of demonic activity involved. In the world, we call them mentally ill, retarded, insane, or having some sort of mental disorder. In other words, their thinking is not normal.

What does the Bible say concerning our natural mind? In 2 Timothy 1:7, it says, “**For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**” If we do not have a “**sound mind,**” then we are not normal, and our condition is not from God. This is evidence of some other spirit in operation. The Bible tells us in Romans 12:2 that we are to renew our natural minds. That means, unless “we take control” of our natural mind, someone else will. That someone is the devil!

There are many conditions in the natural minds of people that did not come from God. A “spirit of fear,” is one of them. God does not give His children a spirit of fear. Another one is a “lying spirit.” Lying spirits do not come from God.

The sad thing is that “Spirit-filled” Christians are letting other spirits have a place in their natural minds. Those who do that are called “**children of disobedience,**” in Ephesians 2:2. Yet, God has a better plan for His children, called “**the perfect law of liberty,**” whereby we become doers

of the Word and not hearers only. (James 1:25).

Let us look at some of the different spirits that manifest in the lives of “those who are God’s Children.” In Galatians 5:19-21 it lists a number of manifestations of spirits called “the works of the flesh.” It says,

**Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

A total of seventeen manifestations of works of the flesh are listed here. Yet, many of these listed here are not understood by Christians today, living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The meaning of these old English words are not clear to many today. So let us get a better understanding of what they mean.

(1) **Adultery:** (spiritual and sexual). (2) **fornication:** (spiritual and sexual). (3) **uncleanness:** (impurity). (4) **lasciviousness:** (sexual activity, disregarding accepted rules and standards). (5) **Idolatry:** (image-worship, idols) (6) **witchcraft:** (medication, drugs, magic, sorcery (use of evil supernatural power over people and their affairs; black magic; or charm)). (7) **hatred:** (hostility; by implication, a reason for opposition: enmity). (8) **variance:** (a quarrel, wrangling: contention, debate, strife). (9) **emulations:** (jealousy, as of a husband; or an enemy, envy(-ing), fervent mind, indignation). (10) **wrath:** (passion, fierceness, indignation). (11) **strife:** (faction: contention(-ious) intrigue (to carry on a secret love affair--to plot or scheme secretly or underhandedly--to excite the interest or curiosity of) fascinate; to entangle). (12) **seditions:** (disunion, dissension:--division). (13) **heresies:** (a religious belief opposed to Scriptural doctrine). (14) **Envyings:** (ill-will (as detraction), i.e. jealousy (spite)). (15) **murders:** (murder, be slain with, slaughter.). (16) **drunkenness:** (an intoxicant,(by implication) intoxication). (17) **revellings:** (rioting).

Yet, these only partially sum up the works of the flesh. There still remains the spiritual wickedness, such as false prophecies, false operations of spiritual gifts; exalting oneself, or others, the use of mind control, contacting other spirits, communicating with other spirits.

All of these operate through the natural minds of people, whereas the Holy Spirit operates through the spirit, “from the spirit of man.” The word of knowledge, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits do operate “through” the natural mind, but it’s operation comes from the spirit of man, not from his intellect.

How do we know if a Christian is in their right natural mind? Mainly, they do not indulge or get entangled in any of the works of the flesh. They trust in the LORD and do not lean unto their own understanding. As Jesus said in John 8:12, “**I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**” Darkness is the works of the flesh, whereas light is righteousness. Those who follow Jesus will walk in righteousness, and the blood of Jesus will cleanse them from all sin (1 John 1:7). If we walk after the Spirit, we will not fulfill the

lusts of the flesh. The works of the flesh will have no place in our lives.

Many Christians do not understand the difference between walking after the flesh or after the Spirit, therefore, the works of the flesh do manifest in their lives and they do nothing about them. Many of these works of the flesh manifest among groups in churches and they think nothing of it. Evidently, they do not understand that those who follow the works of the flesh are not in their right natural mind. If they were in their right natural mind, being born again Christians, they would want to follow Jesus, like the man who had the legion of demons cast out of him. He was in his right natural mind and wanted to be with Jesus. He wanted to follow Jesus (Mark 5:18).

When Christians realize that when they follow after the works of the flesh they are following another spirit; they should have a desire to stop, turn around, repent, and follow Jesus. That is why we have grace, to enable us to repent and follow Jesus. ***“He that lives righteous is righteous”*** (1 John 3:7).

# WHO IS IN CONTROL

The Bible says, **“All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made”** (John 1:3). This means, the LORD is the creator of all things. It also says, **“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ”** (Acts 2:36). God made this same Jesus, both LORD and Christ. What does that mean? The name “Jesus” pertains to His humanity, as the Son of Man. The title LORD pertains to His position in heaven and on earth as the Son of God, the creator of all things. The title “Christ” identifies the anointing upon Him.

As “LORD,” God gave Jesus power and authority over all that He created, that includes you and I, for we are also a part of His creation. Making Jesus “Christ,” means that God anointed “Jesus of Nazareth” (a Man) with the Holy Spirit and power to do whatsoever needed to be done; the power is in the anointing. Acts 10:38 says, **“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”** A Man, born of a woman, in His human flesh, was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power from God. By this anointing, He became “the Anointed One.” He was not just an ordinary man, He was the Son of God, the Savior of the world. He came that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

Jesus came down from heaven to do the will of God the Father. Before He came down from heaven, born of a woman, He had already created all things. The Bible says, **“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him”** (Col. 1:16). It says, **“...all things were created by him, and for him.”** If everything was created by Jesus and for Jesus, who are we to tell Jesus what He can or cannot do in our lives?

Who has control of our natural minds? Let us look a few examples from the gospels. In Matthew 16:21, it tells us; **“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”** This first time Jesus told His disciples of His death and resurrection could have been almost a year or more before He died. Matthew does not record the times Jesus went up to the feast at Jerusalem. Yet, if we follow the footsteps of Jesus, there were a number of times Jesus went to Jerusalem at the times of the various feasts.

A second time in Matthew 17:22,23 it says,

**And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:**

**And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.**

This was most likely before or at the time of the feast of Tabernacles (which is in the fall of the year), about six-months before Jesus death and resurrection. John 7:1,2 mentions when Jesus

went up to the feast of Tabernacles. This was before Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43).

Again, a third time in Matthew 20:17-19 it says,

**And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,  
Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,  
And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.**

This third time could have been about the time of the feast of dedication (John 10:22), which was following the feast of tabernacles. This feast was in December, whereas the feast of tabernacles was in late September or early October (depending upon the day of the new moon that year). Matthew does not give us the dates when Jesus told His disciples these three times, therefore, this third time could also have been after Lazarus was raised from the dead, or just before His last time of going up for the feast of Passover, about April, when He was taken and did die on the Cross.

Therefore, Matthew records three times Jesus spoke to His disciples of His death and resurrection, before Jesus entered Jerusalem the week of the Passover.

Now, after Jesus died and rose again from the dead, Peter and John ran to the sepulcher, and saw the cloths lying, and the napkin that was about His head lying separately. Yet, they did not believe for joy, for they were not totally convinced that He actually rose again from the dead. We see evidence of this in Luke 24:36-43; when Jesus appeared to them the evening of His resurrection. They were afraid when they saw Him. He had to show them His hands and His feet, then He had to eat fish and honeycomb in front of them before they would believe.

Who was in control of the disciples thinking? Why didn't they believe the first time Jesus told them of His death and resurrection at least six-months or more before He was crucified? Jesus kept telling them of His upcoming death and resurrection, yet they did not believe Him. Who was in control of their natural minds? The LORD or the disciples?

Now, look at the two disciples on the way to Emmus, the day of Jesus resurrection. They walked with Jesus for hours that afternoon. Jesus talked with them, and at one time saying to them,  
**O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:  
Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?** (Luke 24:25,26)

Why didn't they believe it was Jesus before He broke bread with them (Luke 24:30)? Because it tells us in Luke 24:16, **“But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.”**

Who was in control of their eyes and natural minds that they did not know Jesus while He

walked with them? Were they in control? Was the devil in control? Or was God in control of their natural minds? Then, who opened their eyes that they might know Him in Luke 24:31?

What about the disciples who saw Him eat fish and honeycomb before them that evening? (Luke 24:40-43) What happened that they truly believed? It says, **“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures”** (Luke 24:45).

Unless the LORD opens our understanding, we will not understand. That means, the LORD has more control over what we think and do, than we give Him credit for. We need to have our natural minds opened if we are to walk with the LORD!

How do we get our natural minds in a position where the LORD can open them to understand? We must renew our natural mind on the Word of God (Rom. 12:2). This should be done daily, for the devil will do all he can to stop us from receiving what the LORD has for us.

Look at Jacob and Esau. Who was in control of Esau’s life? Look what it says in Genesis 25:23; **“And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.”** Esau was not yet born when the LORD spoke to Rebekah, and told her that Esau would serve Jacob. Did Esau have a choice as to who he would serve, God or the pleasures of this world? Yes, he did have the choice; but he chose to love the world and the things of this world. Was the LORD in total control of what Esau did? No, not really, Esau could have taken the time to seek the LORD while He still could be found; but Esau did not. Esau spent his time in the things of this world, his hunting and desiring other things.

Because of this, when Esau was hungry, he sold his birthright for a bowl of pottage (Gen. 25:27-34). Did the LORD force Esau to sell his birthright? No, but the LORD knew before Jacob and Esau were born that Esau would sell his birthright to Jacob. The LORD will not go against our free will to choose whatsoever we desire to do. Esau chose to sell his birthright and the LORD honored Esau’s decision.

Let’s look at Job. Keeping in mind, this is the LORD’S creation, He is the potter and we are the clay (Rom. 9:20,21). Who made the decision that Job’s children and possessions would be destroyed, and Job would be left with only his wife and a few friends? Was it Job? Was it the devil? Or, was it the LORD? In Job, Chapter One, it shows us that Job was a religious person, *“that sent and sanctified his children, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: this he did continually”* (Job 1:5). Then it says, **“And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?”** (Job. 1:8).

What did Job have to do with the conversation the LORD had with Satan? Not a thing. Job didn’t even know the LORD was talking to Satan about him.

Then came the destruction of Job's children and his possessions. Who destroyed these things, Job, the devil, or the LORD? Did Job say the devil could go ahead and destroy them? What about Job's health. In Job, Chapter Two; who decided the devil could "*smite Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown*"? What did Job have to say about what the devil did?

What about King Ahab in 1 Kings, Chapter 22? Ahab was a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He was not of Ishmael, who was of the flesh, but of Isaac, who was the son of promise.

King Jehoshaphat came down to King Ahab. Ahab said, "**Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?**" (1 Kings 22:3). Then King Ahab asked King Jehoshaphat if he would go with him into battle to take Ramothgilead. Jehoshaphat agreed to go with him into battle. Then Ahab called his prophets to inquire of them if he should go to battle. They said to go...

Then Jehoshaphat said to Ahab, "**Is there not here a prophet of the LORD besides, that we might enquire of him?**" (1 Kings 22:7). Verse 8 says, "**And the king of Israel (Ahab) said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.**"

When Micaiah came, he prophesied, saying,

**Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.**

**And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.**

**And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.**

**And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.**

**Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee.**

Now, who was in control of the thoughts of Ahab's prophets? Who was in control of Ahab's thoughts? If you read on, Ahab died in the battle at Ramothgilead (1 Kings 22:37). Why did Ahab die in battle? Did Ahab know that he was going contrary to the will of God? Why didn't Ahab change his mind and not go to battle at Ramothgilead?

The Scripture shows Ahab didn't have total control of everything he did. King Ahab seemed to think he was able to deceive the enemy by having Jehoshaphat go into battle in his kingly robes, but he did not wear his kingly robes. Ahab thought he would not be spotted by the enemy, but the LORD cannot be deceived. The LORD said, Ahab would die in battle and he did.

What about Judas Iscariot, was he in control of his thoughts. Was he in his right mind at all times? What happened in John 13:2? It says, **“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him.”**

Where did those thoughts come from? Who put them in Judas' heart? Could Judas have prevented the devil from putting those thoughts in his heart? Remember what James tells us? **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you”** (James 4:7).

Who's responsibility is it to do the submitting unto God, the LORD'S or the person who receives the thoughts? Do Christians think they have total control of what they do? Just because we are Christians, that doesn't mean we automatically have total control of our thoughts?

The LORD can only be in control if we submit to His Word. We must put the LORD in control ourselves. Paul was writing to Christians when he wrote, **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”** (Gal. 6:7).

Somewhere along the line Christians should get into the Word of God and find out who is in control of their lives and why? Are they in control? Is the LORD in control? Or, is the devil in control? Who is putting who in control? Who makes the decisions in our lives as to who is in control? Do we make the end decision or does the LORD or the devil make the end decision?

Who decides if a person will come to the LORD? The Bible says, **“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”** (Rev. 22:17). It says, **“And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”** Does that mean the LORD is in control of the decisions we make? Does that mean the devil is in control of the decisions we make? Or, does that mean “we are in control” of the decision we make? Jesus said in John 6:44, **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** If we read carefully what Jesus said, the person who God draws still has to make the decision, they must come to Him. God does not force anyone to come to Jesus.

The decision Esau made to sell his birthright was “his decision.” He did it, the LORD didn't do it, the devil didn't do it, “Esau did it.” Who opened the door for Satan to steal and destroy in Job's life, the LORD, the devil, or Job? Study the book of Job real closely, and you will find that Job opened the door for the devil in his own life.

Now, the question is, did Esau have “total” control over his life? Did Job have “total” control over his life? Did Ahab have “total” control over his life?

Do you think you have “total” control over your life? If you do, you have made “a big mistake,” you have been deceived. There is no way that the clay has any power over the potter. The created does not have power over the Creator. The LORD is LORD, and there is none that has power over the LORD: not the devil and not you or I. Yet, we can have control if we will, **“Submit**

**yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).**

The devil has power and anyone who thinks he doesn't has already been deceived. The devil has them right where he wants them. Therefore, when they give him place in their lives, all he has to do is lead them on to destruction.

Until we learn from the Scriptures that our thoughts are not the LORD'S thoughts and our ways are not the LORD'S ways we will be deceived. It tells us in Isaiah 55:8,9,

**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.**

**For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

It is very plain and clear that we must do something about our thoughts. Proverbs 14:12 says, **“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”** It doesn't make any difference how right it seems to us, unless it is in total agreement with the written Word of God, it is not right. If our decisions are not based upon the written Word of God, then our decisions are **WRONG**; no matter how right it seems to us. He is the potter, we are the clay... He is right and we are not right unless we agree totally and completely with the written Word of God.

# HOW TO PUT THE LORD IN CONTROL

In John 1:1 it says, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”** Until we decide that Jesus “is the Word” and we put Jesus in control we will be deceived. You cannot go contrary to the Word of God and still walk with Jesus. It is not possible, and anyone who thinks they can are deceived.

Now, we know from the Scriptures that God is for us and not against us (Rom. 8:31). If God is for us, then why shouldn't we be for God. If God does everything for us, why don't we do everything for Him? Colossians 3:23 says, **“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.”** Why do we want to please men and not the LORD? Why isn't the LORD more important than people? Why not put the LORD in control, as long as we cannot be “in total control” ourselves?

If we want the LORD in total control we will have to do something about our natural minds, “our thoughts.” That is the only way we will be able to put the LORD in control. The Bible tells us what to do and how to do it, to put the LORD in control. James 4:7 says, **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”** The devil wants control and the LORD wants control. The only way the LORD can be in control is if we first submit ourselves unto God.

The best way to start is to start each day, thanking and praising the LORD for all He has done, and is doing in our lives. We should forever be thankful to the LORD for what He has done in our lives. We should always give Him the praise and glory for all He has done in our lives... Then, we should take control of our thoughts according to 2 Corinthians 10:5. We should renew our natural mind upon the Word of God according to Romans 12:2.

Then, we can apply Philippians 4:4-9, which says,

**Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.**

**Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**

**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

**And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

**Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**

**Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**

We need the peace of God in our hearts and our natural minds at all times, day and night. It is the peace of God that will bring us through every trial and every temptation that comes before us. In Isaiah 26:3 it says, **“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.”** We are promised “perfect peace;” but there is a condition attached to this promise... We must keep our natural mind stayed upon the LORD, and we must trust in the LORD...

If we let our natural minds be controlled by the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), we will not have peace in our spirit. If we do not have peace in our spirit, we will not have peace in our natural mind. God works from our spirit, and what we permit God to do in our spirit, and what we permit God to do in our natural mind will determine if we are to walk after the Spirit or after the flesh... If we want to inherit the kingdom of God (reign of God in our lives), we must have peace in our spirit. Romans 14:17 says, **“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”** This peace only comes from the Holy Spirit, Who dwells in the spirits of all who are baptized in the Holy Spirit. We enter into the kingdom of God by drawing all our strength from God within our spirit. The fulness of the Godhead dwells in our spirit.

Everything we need from God is within us, “within our spirit.” The kingdom of God is within us... It is from within “our spirit” that God controls everything in our lives. But we must put God in control; otherwise we will end up walking after the flesh; which is contrary to the will of God (Gal. 5:17).

Once a person is born again of the Word and the Spirit, the battle goes into full force, the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; therefore, Galatians 5:16,17 says,  
**This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.  
For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.**

If we are to walk after the Spirit, we cannot do our own will. We cannot do what we want to do. We must renew our natural minds upon the Word and walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh...

# THE BATTLE

Satan knows the natural man is controlled by his natural mind. Therefore, any way that Satan can get control of the natural mind of man, it gives him the ability to control what man does. In the garden of Eden Satan used the serpent to talk to Eve.

Eve, being a natural person, operated from her natural mind, considering the thoughts that came to her mind. All the serpent had to do was speak words that would cause Eve to question the Word of God. Once she questioned the Word of God Satan was able to change her thinking to agree with his deception. When Eve changed her thinking to agree with the serpent, Satan had her in his control and she was deceived. Being deceived, she disobeyed the Word of the LORD and did eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Eve, being deceived, and giving place for the devil, talked to Adam, and Adam sinned; he ate also of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The LORD said to Adam, **“Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life”** (Gen. 3:17).

Satan has not changed, he is still the same devil he was at the time of Adam and Eve. He does everything he can to get thoughts into the natural minds of Spirit-filled Christians as well as others to do whatsoever he wants them to do. He will inject thoughts in our natural minds “directly,” or by having someone else speak words to us, to get us to go against the written Word of God. Satan will give us visions, dreams, or thoughts with no one else around. These thoughts; if they are not brought into subjection to the Word of God will have some effect upon what we do. Then, Satan will also use others, even Spirit-filled Christians, to speak words to us to get us to go contrary to the leading of the Holy Spirit within us. Whatever Satan can do, he will do.

Poor teaching within the body of Christ today has led us into the end times that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24. Many Christians are going around saying they are anointed, and they have a message from the LORD for the body of Christ. Some of them are anointed, and some of them have a message for the body of Christ. But there are many more false operations within the body of Christ than there are true anointings. There are more false prophets with great signs and wonders than there are true prophets with great signs and wonders.

For the most part, the deception within the body of Christ today is so great that very few teach that Christians “are not told” to “judge after the flesh,” or “according to the flesh”. This is the way the Jews judged according to the law. In John 8:5-11 Jesus taught how to judge another, by the Spirit, not by the natural mind of the flesh. In John 8:15,16, Jesus said,

**Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.**

**And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.**

Every judgement we make should be in agreement with the New Covenant, the Word, the Spirit, and the Blood (1 John 5:8). Jesus first, passed judgement upon the scribes and Pharisees that brought the woman to Him. Then He also passed judgement upon the woman according to the New Covenant, saying, **“Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more”** (John 8:11).

Judging after the flesh or judging according to the flesh is “operating from our natural mind, according to what you see, hear, feel, smell, touch, or taste.” If we make decisions, based upon what natural people base their decisions upon we miss God “totally and completely.” When we miss God, we agree with the devil...

God operates from our spirit, not our natural mind. In Job 32:8, the prophet Elihu spoke by the spirit of God saying, **“there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”** We receive wisdom, knowledge, and understanding from God “from our spirit.” This wisdom, knowledge, and understanding comes by way of “inspiration from God.” Our spirit is the candle of the LORD. Proverbs 20:27 tells us, **“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.”** For Christians, the anointing of the LORD abides within us, in our spirit (1 John 2:27). Out of our belly flows the rivers of living water (the Word of God), by the anointing within us. In John 7:38, Jesus said, **“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”** The apostle John explained what Jesus was talking about in the next verse, saying, **“(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”**

How can two walk together lest they agree (Amos 3:3). The only way we can agree with God is to live, move, and have our being “in Christ.” “In Christ” means “in the anointing, by the anointing, and through the anointing.” Now the anointing abides in us! The kingdom of God is within us. It is from our spirit that we hear from God not from our natural mind, not from what others say, saying they heard from God. No, God is in our spirit, the fullness of God dwells in us (Col. 2:9,10). The purpose is, that God can be in control of our lives “totally and completely.” Not, by someone saying “God told me to tell you.....” God is in us, so He can tell us personally, Himself, and we don’t need someone else to tell you what God has to say to us.... In 1 John 2:27, it says, **“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”** This does not eliminate the five-fold ministry gifts (Eph. 4:11). But, it does take the place of all this “false, personal prophecy” that goes around the body of Christ. God wants His Children to quit going around to other Christians, who say they are anointed, to find out what God wants them to do. If you need a Word from God, you will get it from God yourself, personally, from within your spirit where God dwells in His fulness.

The devil is a liar, and he uses Spirit-filled Christians to do his talking, his deceiving, his dirty work. Spirit-filled Christians are Satan’s best tools, the ones he can use the best to deceive others within the body of Christ. It’s time Christians learned how to hear from God for themselves from within their spirit, where God dwells in His fulness (Col. 2:9,10).

The Spirit of God is called “the Spirit of peace.” If we are led by the Spirit of God we will be led in peace, not pressure, not condemnation, not anything other than peace. If we do not have peace then we didn’t hear from God.... Romans 14:17 tells us, the kingdom of God is **“peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”** If we do not have that peace and joy, then God is not in on what we are doing; “it’s time to make a change”.... Go to Philippians 4:6-8, Which says,

**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

**And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

**Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**

Which one, the kingdom of God or the kingdom of this world? The flesh or the Spirit? The inward man or the outward man? The Word of God or the words of men? These are all contrary to each other. They are either of the flesh, or they are of the Holy Spirit, which one will we follow?

To walk after the Spirit we must live and move according to the Word of God. Jesus, is the Creator. Jesus is the Word of God. When we are born again of the Word and the Spirit, we are in Him and He is in us; we are One Spirit with the LORD! If we are who the Word of God says we are, then we should walk according to the Word of God and not according to the flesh.

The old man of the flesh walks after the flesh. The outward man lives according to the outward things of this world. The inward man lives according to the heavenly things, “the things of God, the Word of God, led by the Spirit of God.”

If we are led by the Spirit of God, then we are not led by the natural mind; instead, we are led by the mind of Christ in our inward man. The outward man perishes while the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). The Spirit of God is working in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

Unless we deny the outward man and live according to the inward man, led by the Spirit of God, we will be deceived. But if we live by the inward man, in agreement with the Word of God, led by the Holy Spirit, we will live forever. The inward man is not controlled by outward things, not by the things of this world, but by heavenly things, by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Kingdom of God within us is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

This peace and joy does not come by having the things of this world, but rather by praising and worshiping God in the Spirit. We live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, move in the Spirit, and the Word of God manifests in our flesh. We do not seek the things of this world, we seek to do the will of God. We do not seek to please men, but we seek to please God.

There is an outward man of the flesh, and there is an inward man of the Spirit. The inward man of the Spirit is born again of the Spirit and is one Spirit with the LORD. We must, therefore, renew our natural mind to know the things which are of God and the things which are of the flesh.

Satan deceives Spirit-filled Christians by getting them to operate from their natural mind in spiritual operations. Thereby, they are still walking after the flesh contrary to being led by the Holy Spirit. They are doing the will of the flesh and not the will of God. They are spiritual, doing spiritual things, manifesting great signs and wonders, but from the wrong spirits not the Holy Spirit. Those who do these things are more concerned about the things of this world than they are about the things of God. They bring into their operations all sorts of ways to satisfy the flesh and the desire for the things of this world saying it is of God. They even say, “you do not have the things of this world because you do not ask for them”! Then they misquote what James said, “**yet ye have not, because ye ask not**” (James 4:2b). They leave out the rest of what James said in verse three; thereby, making the Word of God of none-effect by “their interpretations” to gain “their worldly things,” implying that God desires for them to have these things. Look what Jesus said,

**Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?**

**(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**

**But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you** (Matt. 6:31-33).

If we are not even to think about those things, “which we know we have need of” why should we ask for worldly things? If God is going to add the things we have need of when we seek the kingdom of God, why do we have to concern ourselves about worldly things, money, cars, beautiful homes, etc.? If God is going to supply them, why do Christians use worldly programs and all sorts of gimmicks and deception to get them? Many are teaching Christians contrary to 1 John 2:15,16 and saying there is nothing wrong with desiring these things.

Isn't God able to do what He said He will do? Do we have to help God in the natural to do what He said He would do without our help? Can we walk after the flesh and after the Spirit at the same time? No, the Scripture says, the flesh and the Spirit are contrary to each other (Gal. 5:17). God will take care of the flesh if we walk after the Spirit. If we speak the Word of God over the circumstances the circumstances will change, not by our power but by the Word of God that lives and moves by the Spirit of God within us. We will always have peace and joy in our Spirit when we walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh.

# YOU HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST

The Word of God says in 1 Corinthians 2:16b, “... **we have the mind of Christ.**” The Word of God is true, therefore, if you are born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit, “YOU have the mind of Christ.” That means we have the ability to know things and operated from a mind that never makes a mistake. Jesus never made a mistake. Everything He did was 100% accurate in what He did and how He did it. He never failed in anything He did.

That is what should be happening in the lives of Christians who have the mind of Christ. We should not be making any mistakes. We should never miss the mark. Everything we do should be in agreement with the Word of God. Whatsoever we say, so shall it be!

Yet, we see that many Christians are missing it over and over again. Does that mean these don't have the mind of Christ. NO, That means they are not using the mind of Christ that they have in their spirit. The mind of Christ is not the same as our natural mind. Our natural mind operates from our soul, according to our intellect. The mind of Christ operates from our spirit according to the Spirit of God within us.

It is the Spirit of God within us that gives us the understanding and the ability to operate by the mind of Christ. Paul wrote in Philippians 2:5 “**Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.**” The mind of Christ was in Jesus. Now, Paul wrote, “**Let this mind be in you. . .**” It's the same mind that was in Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit. It's the anointing that causes the mind of Christ to operate.

Yes, we have the mind of Christ. That is, if we have the Holy Spirit, Who is the anointing. And, being that we have the Holy Spirit, we also have the mind of Christ. But, Paul wrote, “**Let this mind. . .**” That means, we have a choice. We can let the Holy Spirit work in our lives by the anointing, that the mind of Christ can make the decisions we need made, or we can make decisions with our natural mind of the flesh without the help of the Holy Spirit. “**Let**” means, it's up to us if we will operate by the mind of Christ or by our natural mind of the flesh.

Many Spirit-filled Christians are not “Letting the mind of Christ operate.” They are still operating from their natural mind. They make many mistakes, and wonder why things don't work out right for them. Yet, the Scripture declares in Romans 8:28, “. . . **we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**” If all things do work together for our good, then why are things happening that don't seem to be for our good? Especially, when the Word of God promises us they should be for us.

There's something wrong when Christians have financial problems. How can Christians have

financial problems when all things are working together for their good? Does God want His Children living in poverty? It doesn't say that in the Bible. Does God want His Children living with sickness and disease in their bodies? It doesn't say that in the Bible.

What's wrong when Christians have financial problems? What's wrong when Christians have sickness and disease in their bodies? Their problem is, they are not making use of the mind of Christ that is in their spirit. They are still operating from their natural mind of the flesh.

We must learn how to operate from the mind of Christ, which is in our spirit. It's the mind of Christ, where all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding come from. As we shift over into the mind of Christ, we make sound decisions. Our judgements are clear and without error. Everything we do from the mind of Christ works together for our good, as well as the good of others in the body of Christ. The decisions we need to make are made with precision and accuracy. Every detail is precise and we never make mistakes when operating from the mind of Christ.

When the Word of God calls it **“the mind of Christ,”** it is saying it is the mind of “the anointed One.” The anointed One is the Son of God, the Creator of all things. He is LORD over this creation. He knows every detail of everything thing that was and is and is to come. There is nothing hid from Him. Nothing happens without His knowledge. He is God!

The mind of Christ operates by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is the anointing that God anointed the Son of God with (Acts 10:38). Without the anointing, Jesus would not be Christ. Without the anointing, there would not be any sons of God (Rom. 8:14).

It is the sons of God that are led by the Spirit of God. When the Spirit of God is leading us in making our decisions He never makes a mistake. His leading is accurate and precise. He never misses even one, one-hundredth of one percent. Every detail is accurate, just like everything else God has created. God never makes a mistake.

Now, we have the mind of Christ. All we need to do is learn how to tap into the mind of Christ and find the answers to every question, every problem, every circumstance in our lives. When we receive from the mind of Christ within us we flow with God. God the Holy Spirit works out every detail for us, with precision and accuracy.

Yet, we should not let ourselves get so spiritual that we think God only gives us answers in regards to those things pertaining to ministry work. No. God is for us, not against us. The Holy Spirit gives us answers, and guidance in every area of our lives. He works from within our spirit, leading us, guiding us, helping us, etc. He is for us in every area of our lives. If we follow His guiding and leading we will not make mistakes. He knows the past, the present, and the future. He knows everything there is to know about every thing that anyone needs to know.

I could give hundreds of examples of times when the Holy Spirit guided me and helped me in my everyday life. Things that we would not consider as having anything to do with ministry work.

One example: There was a time when I was in the television repair business. I had this family where the father and the mother were both deaf. The children could hear, but neither of the parents could hear. The father come over to my shop one Saturday afternoon. He wrote on a piece of paper for me that he needed me to come to his house that afternoon.

They had a caption machine connected to their video tape recorder. When they were watching the television while recording, the words would appear on the screen as the people talked. Whatever was said, would appear, written on the bottom of the screen so they could read it (being they could not hear).

When they were recording, the words were there. But, when they played the video tape back, the words were not there. Now, the company that sold them the equipment also connected it up for them, then left. But, it didn't work after they left. Evidently, they did not check to see if it worked properly.

This was Saturday afternoon. The company that connected it up didn't work on Saturday afternoons. Therefore, the father came to me. I went over to his house that afternoon. I checked everything I could. I did everything my natural mind could think of. Yet, it still didn't work. It was getting late and I needed to get it working so I could leave.

After quite some time, I stopped trying and asked the LORD to help. I said something like this, "LORD, You know what is wrong, I don't know. I thank You LORD for showing me what it is." The mind of Christ opened up to me and as I looked at the back of the machine I noticed that two wires were reversed. The one coming into the unit and the one going out of the unit were reversed. Yet, they were close enough together that the signal could cross over during the recording and appear on the television. But the caption signal did not get into the video recorder, therefore it didn't get recorded on the video tape.

The mind of Christ in you knows all the answers. It's up to you if you will tap into the mind of Christ and receive the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of Christ. It doesn't make any difference if it has to do with your every day life or your ministry work. God wants to work all things together for your good (that includes those things in your everyday life).

The fulness of the Godhead dwells in you (Col. 2:9,10). Whatever you have need of, God is in you to supply all your needs. The mind of Christ gives us wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of whatsoever we have need of.

# DECEPTION

Galatians 6:7 says, **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”** It’s when we “walk after the flesh” that we become deceived. God is never deceived.

The Word of God is here for OUR GOOD. God doesn’t need His Word written in the Bible for Him to go by. He had it written for us to go by, that we would not be deceived. When we refuse to abide by the guidelines of His Written Word we become deceived. Sometimes we could call God’s Word “commandments,” other times we could call His Word “laws.” No matter what we call them, they are written for OUR GOOD.

When Christians do not recognize the value of God’s Word in their lives, and live the way the world lives, they are “walking after the flesh” and not after the Spirit. The lusts of the flesh are contrary to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and Christians who follow the lusts of the flesh will be deceived. One area of deception Christians get themselves into is in the area of partnership, companionship, and marriage.

Christians go into partnership in business deals with other Christians who are not led by the Holy Spirit. The devil entices them with some great money-making idea that seems too good to pass up. They overlook the fact that the deal is a little shady and they go for it. Soon the government looks into the deal and they end up in the court system for their eagerness to make a lot of money on a shady deal. Had they listened to their spirit, for peace in their spirit they would have known the deal was not pleasing to God. If it is not pleasing to God it should not be pleasing to Christians either.

There are many Christians today who have been deceived in companionship, partnerships, and marriages as a result of “walking after the flesh” and not following the leading of the Holy Spirit. Churches are not teaching the truth in this area, and many are being deceived. The reason for the flood in Genesis, Chapter Six, is because those who were led by the Holy Spirit “at that time” (called the sons of God), stopped listening to the Holy Spirit and went and chose for themselves wives of who they chose (women who were not led by the Spirit of God, called daughters of men). They did not seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in their choice of who they should marry.

Today, this is the normal way Christians choose their wives and husbands. They do not seek the leading of the Holy Spirit, but rather choose for themselves who they desire. Their choice is based upon “the flesh,” the natural means of what they see, hear, feel, etc. *“They have eyes and cannot see, they have ears and cannot hear”* as the Old Testament prophets would say. The Holy Spirit is within them, but they do not wait upon the LORD before they decide who they will get involved with. They jump first, then look later, so to say.

It’s easy to be deceived if we are not seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit *“at all times.”* At first, it seems the Holy Spirit is working, and He very well could be. There are ways to know if the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives involving other people.

One of the most important signs of the working of the Holy Spirit is “peace in your spirit.” If you do not have peace in your spirit, then it’s time to check with the Holy Spirit in prayer and spending time alone with God to find out why?

Another way to recognize the working of the Holy Spirit between two or more individuals is “they always agree.” Each individual will receive the same thought, many times, at the same precise moment. God always gives everyone involved the same idea and many times, “at the same time.” But, did you know? The devil tries to duplicate God, and make it seem like it is God, when it’s the devil!

It’s easy to miss God, even though He is right down inside of us, “*working to will and to do His good pleasure*” (Phil. 2:13). “*God is for us, and not against us,*” and we still miss God (Rom. 8:31). When it comes to two individual people, possibly getting married someday; there are certain things about the way God works that is different than the way the world works. “*The Spirit if God is contrary to the world*” (Gal. 5:17). In Genesis 2:24 it is mentioned that “*two shall be one.*” That means, not three or four or more, but only two, “one male and one female.” If a Christian is dating more than one person of the opposite sex with the intention of finding someone to marry; they are walking in the flesh and “God is not in on it.”

God does not have any alternate plans. Everything God does is exact and precise. There are no alternatives with God.

It’s time to wake up, Christians! God knows the future of every individual. He would not lead us into deception, nor would He want us to waste our time with the wrong person.

Our time is valuable to God here on earth. We have a job to do, and God wants us about His business. Now, God is not against marriage, He instituted it. He is not against two individuals getting to know each other before marriage. But He does know the future, and He would not suggest going contrary to His Word or divine purpose.

When one person is interested in two or more other individual people and doesn’t know which one to choose, God is not in on it. Had they listened to God in their spirit they would know which one, to say the least.

When Christians by-pass God to find a mate in this life, they are going to the devils system to find God... It don’t work, the devil is not interested in helping Christians have a good relationship and marriage with other Christians. His operation is for the opposite purpose. He is out to destroy marriages and relationships.

Some Christians, “walking in the flesh,” think they can set their own rules for marriage before they marry. They think they can change the other persons mind, and control what the other person does or will do after they are married. This is all flesh, to say the least. You cannot change another person, nor can you change their mind on certain subjects. Agreements before marriage that

do not agree with the Word of God will fail to say the least.

Christians do not have total control over their thoughts, their ways, and their actions. They think they have, but we either agree with God and His Written Word, or we become **“children of disobedience”** (Eph. 2:2). Children of disobedience agree with the prince of the powers of the air, (demonic forces that control those who walk after the flesh). When Christians walk after the flesh (operating from their natural mind), they are walking according to the demonic forces of the air. They are disobedient to God and Satan becomes their master.

It’s difficult enough for the Holy Spirit to work with Christians who are already married before they come to the LORD, without Christians making it more difficult by using the worlds system to find a mate.

Within marriages, Satan works through the natural minds of individuals. Women, who do not want to submit to their husbands, find all kinds of ways to say the Word of God is not right in regards to submission to the husband. When they do that, they are siding with the devil and he is in control of their natural mind. Submission to the husband is God’s Word, and God will back up His Word 100% for those who will submit (according to His Word). It’s when they want to change God’s Word to suit their plans and their ideas that they give place for the devil.

This is not only true for women not wanting to submit to their husbands, it is also true for husbands who want to dominate their wives. Husbands who think they are always right and have the right to control their wives and make slaves out of them are walking in the flesh (according to their natural mind), and giving place for the devil.

Everyone must submit to the LORD first, then to the Holy Spirit within them (by this, they have access to the mind of Christ, which is within them). Then they must always verify their actions by the written Word of God in agreement from Genesis through Revelation. NOT their own “one verse interpretations.” Not the interpretations of other individuals who call themselves ministers, apostles, prophets, teachers, or pastors. God does not set His standards according to individual interpretations of His Word. God’s Word is always verified by a witness of the Holy Spirit within every individual involved. Where there is no witness, God is not working to say the least. In 1 John 5:8, it says, **“And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water (Word), and the blood: and these three agree in one.”** The word “water” is symbolic of “the Word of God.” These three always agree... They never disagree... In 1 John 5:9, it starts off saying, **“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater...”**

In the Old Covenant, they received the witness of men, “in the mouths of two or three witnesses...” This is Old Covenant. This is not New Covenant. The New Covenant is **“the witness of God is greater.”** The witness of *“the Holy Spirit, the Word of God and the Blood of Jesus”* is for the New Covenant. Not, the witness of men!

Satan has carried this Old Covenant “witness of two people” over into the churches to

deceive and destroy within the body of Christ. Many Christians have been deceived by the witness of two or more people calling themselves ministers, apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, or pastors. Especially those calling themselves prophets in these last days. If you cannot verify it with the written Word of God “according to the New Covenant, it most likely is not from God.”

The New Covenant and the Old Covenant are not the same. In the Old Covenant, God’s chosen people walked after the flesh... They had no other way to walk, they were in the flesh. Christians in the New Covenant “are not in the flesh but in the Spirit” (Rom. 8:9). If we walk after the flesh we become enemies of God; **“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be”** (Rom. 8:7). The carnal mind is the mind that is controlled by the natural man. **“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace”** (Rom. 8:6).

The body of Christ is full of people who have received two or three false prophecies from two or three different individuals, even at different times, and all these prophecies agree. That still doesn’t mean it was God. If it does not agree with the written Word of God in accordance to the New Covenant it is false, to say the least. It’s Christians, walking in the flesh (using their natural mind) to please those who walk in the flesh....

Back to husbands and wives... A married woman told me she hears from God, then she said, “God told her, half of everything she earns is her’s...” This is not the mind of Christ! She heard directly from the devil (Matt. 16:23). Satan, himself could have done the speaking and she thinks it’s God.

Now, this is not to say this woman is not a Spirit-filled Christian. But Satan can speak to Spirit-filled as well as he can speak to those who are not born again.

Let me explain something about hearing voices and claiming to hear from God. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God (John 1:14). He was with the Father in the beginning. He came into this world, born of a woman and the Holy Spirit. Then at about the age of thirty, Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16). He was also filled with (full of) the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1). Yet, while He was in the wilderness for forty days the devil himself spoke to Jesus.

So don’t ever think that the devil can’t speak to Spirit-filled Christians. In a true sense of the word “Christian,” Jesus was a Spirit-filled Christian. The word “Christian,” means “Christ in.” Christ means “anointed.” The anointing of the Holy Spirit was both upon and in Jesus, therefore, in a true sense of the word, Jesus was the first Christian to walk upon this earth.

Now, if Satan can talk to Jesus, he can also talk to any Spirit-filled Christian. That is why it is so important to have both the Word of God in us, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. For it is a combination of the Word of God and the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit that teaches us all things. We know the truth by the Word of God and the witness of the Holy Spirit within us. The Word of God and the Holy Spirit always agree.

Satan also spoke through Peter in Matthew 16:22. Jesus rebuked both Peter and Satan for the thoughts Peter received from the devil. Peter was one of the twelve disciples that the Father gave to Jesus (John 17:12). Peter was given power against unclean spirits (Matt. 10:1). Peter did not bring his thoughts into agreement with the Word of God (which was already written in the Old Testament) concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Everyone hears the voice of the devil at times. He is the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10). We can't stop the devil from speaking to our natural minds, but we do not have to believe what he says. We should bring every thought into subjection unto the Word of God, and cast down every thought that does not agree with the Word of God. We do not have to agree with the devil when we hear his voice speaking to our natural minds.

Christians should know the difference between their natural mind and their spirit. Every thought that comes to their natural mind should be brought into subjection to the Word of God (2 Cor. 5:10).

Let me give another example of Satan using Spirit-filled Christians to control others within the body of Christ. A good friend of mine, a minister in the body of Christ was still single. He was looking to get married some day. He was at a meeting where another Spirit-filled evangelist was ministering. This evangelist looked over to him and said, "God told me the woman you are with is the one you should marry"! The woman he was with was that daughter of another pastor he knew.

He came to me and asked me, "Merle, was that the LORD speaking to me to marry this woman"? In my spirit, it knew it wasn't. Therefore, I asked him, do you have a witness in your spirit that you should marry that woman? He said, No, I just took her along to the meeting to have someone go with me. I told him, if you do not have a witness in your spirit, don't listen to the evangelist. God will always give you a witness in your spirit if it is of God.

A year or so later, this same evangelist was back in town. This time my friend went to the meeting with another woman he had met. Again, this same evangelist spoke out to him, saying, "God told me to tell you, the woman you are with is the one you should marry"! Later, he came to me and said, Merle, do you think that was God? In my spirit, I knew it wasn't God, and I asked him, "did you have a witness in your spirit when he spoke to you"? He said to me, No. I went out with her a few times, but only, just to have someone with me.

A few weeks later he came to me and told me, while he was praying in the Spirit he saw this same woman leaving her house and going out with another man. He felt he should drive over to her house and see what was happening. He drove over to her house and parked a few cars away from the front of her house and waited. Within minutes, another person, who he knew drove up. She came out of the house and got into his car with him. They drove off. He followed them a ways and found out where they went. He knew right then, and there, that she was not the woman he should marry.

If Spirit-filled Christians would learn to listen to their spirit for a witness from God, they

could save themselves a lot of problems. God knows everything, and will reveal things to them if they will stay in tune with God in their spirit.

This friend of mine had many opportunities to let others who think they heard from God tell him what they said, God said. He learned to spend a lot of time praying in the Spirit and studying in the Word. The day came when he found a woman that was right for him and they got married. They are working together in the ministry today.

What about the evangelist who said to him, “God told me the woman you are with is the one you should marry”? There are a lot of Spirit-filled Christians today, speaking words they heard in their “natural mind” that didn’t come from God. They are operating from their natural mind, not the mind of Christ. Don’t be afraid of them (Deut. 18:19-22). Don’t follow their false prophecies. What will happen to those in the ministry who operate from their natural mind in “false gifts of the Spirit”? See the chapter on **“A STRONG DELUSION.”**

Back to wives and husbands. Christians, who think they hear from God, many times are hearing other voices. When a wife says to her husband “that’s your responsibility, that’s not my responsibility” she heard from the demonic forces and she is operating from her natural mind (the flesh). All responsibility within the marriage is the responsibility of both the husband and the wife. The wife is the husband’s help meet, not anything more and not anything less (Gen. 2:18).

A marriage should be a type and shadow of the Body of Christ, where Christ is the head. No one within the body of Christ has the right to tell the LORD what to do; but only to submit to His authority as the Head. The LORD, Who is the head of the body, does nothing of Himself, He only does the Father’s will (John 5:30).

It was that way when Jesus walked this earth, and He never changes. Jesus did only that which the Father showed Him. Everything Jesus did was in agreement with the Holy Spirit. Everything husbands and wives do should also be in agreement with the Holy Spirit.

When someone tries to change the Word of God to suit their ideas or their plans the Holy Spirit will not give witness to it. If there is no witness of the Holy Spirit then it is not from God, but rather of the flesh. **“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”** You cannot go contrary to a witness of the Holy Spirit and do as you please. If you do, you are involved in the works of the flesh. The same spirit that causes those of the world to go against God.

# WHO ARE WE?

This is the LORD'S creation. It was created by Him and for Him (John 1:3,10, Col. 1:16). We are the creatures of His creation. We do not have the right, nor the ability to tell the LORD what He should do in His creation. He is the potter and we are the clay. The potter has the right to make some vessels of honor and some vessels of dishonor (Rom. 9:20-22). Those who are not His Children are still His vessels, He created them.

So are we His vessels. He created us also. Either we are vessels of honor or we are vessels of dishonor. The LORD'S house is a great house. In the LORD'S house there are vessels of honor and there are vessels of dishonor (2 Tim. 2:20).

Even though this is the LORD'S creation, and He has the right to make some vessels unto honor and some unto dishonor. We still have been given the choice, which one we will be? It's our choice, if we will be a vessel unto honor or a vessel unto dishonor. The LORD has given us His Word. The LORD is God, and God is LOVE! Therefore, He has given us His Word in (2 Timothy 2:20,21, saying,

**But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.**

**If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.**

It is our responsibility to purge ourselves of those things that would cause us to become vessels of dishonor. God has given us His Holy Spirit to help purge ourselves of those things. God is for us, not against us. The Holy Spirit is here on earth, in us, to help us. If we do not listen to the Holy Spirit within us, then we can become vessels of dishonor. It's our own doing, not the LORD'S doing. The LORD is not making any of His Children vessels of dishonor.

We are children of God, if we are born again of the Spirit and the Word. God is not against His Children, to make them anything less than the image of His Son. In 1 Corinthians 15:49, it says, **“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”** God is not making vessels of dishonor “out of His children.” If we become vessels of dishonor it's our own doing, *“by walking after the flesh and not after the Spirit.”*

God may be making vessels of dishonor out of those who are not His children, by letting Satan use them. If they refuse to accept the free gift of salvation, Satan is using them. There are many people in the churches today, who are not born again of the Spirit and the Word. Many Christians are going to these churches, thinking, it's ok. They listen to these “so called preachers,” who are walking in the flesh and claiming to be serving God. When, in truth they are not serving God at all.

When Jesus came into the world as the Son of Man, He set the example for us to follow. In everything Jesus did, He did it as a Man, born of a woman, living in the flesh. As a Man, Jesus set

the example for us to follow.

In setting an example for us; Jesus said to those who would receive Him, **“Come follow Me”**! He didn’t mean only to walk the same roads He walked, and go to the same towns and villages He went to. He meant, **“Take My example for your guide”**! Whatsoever He did, do the same. Whatsoever He said, say the same. The way He lived, live. The way He talked, talk. When He made statements about His life, we should apply them to our lives also.

Jesus said, **“I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me”** (John 5:30). This should be an example for us to follow; do exactly the same as Jesus did. In John 5:19, Jesus said, **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”**

If Jesus could do nothing of Himself, why do Christians think they have the ability to make their own decisions and do whatsoever they desire without Satan having any input in their lives? Jesus said in John 15:5. **“for without me ye can do nothing.”** We ought to believe that Jesus is telling the truth. We cannot, “of our own ability” take complete control of our lives. Unless we submit to God as Jesus did, Satan will control our actions and our future. Unless the LORD has control in our lives, we are controlled by the devil and don’t know it. There is only one way to keep our lives until the end; that is to live unto God, by His Word, guided by His Spirit. Any other way will fail.

The Holy Spirit, inspired the apostle Paul to write to the Christians at Corinth. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 it says, **“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”** Unless we control our thoughts, Satan will. It’s up to us, either we are in control or the devil.

The world is not a place to have fun and enjoy everything we see. As Christians, we are not here to enjoy the world, but rather “to do the will of God the Father” as Jesus did the will of His Father. The time for us to enjoy life is when we go to heaven. It will be much more enjoyable up there then down here. In 1 John 2:15-17, it says,

**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.**

**And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**

This doesn’t sound like it is the Father’s will that we enjoy this world and all that is therein. Satan is a liar, and we should not be ignorant of it.

# A REPROBATE MIND

In Romans 1:18-32 it talks about SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIANS upon whom the wrath of God comes. They know God, and are without excuse (Rom. 1:20). But they do not glorify God, neither are they thankful (Rom. 1:21). Some have even gone so far as they do not like to retain God in their knowledge and God gives them up to a reprobate mind (Rom. 1:28). What is a reprobate mind? A reprobate mind is said to be “an unapproved mind, rejected; by implication, worthless (literally or morally):--castaway.” Christians, who do not like to retain God in their knowledge could be given over as a castaway, worthless, rejected mind. The dictionary definition includes, “damned, unprincipled or totally bad; lost soul.”

God has the power to retain a right mind in an individual and He also has the power to turn them over to the devil. As we read Romans 1:18-32 we find that it lists “the extreme cases” of those who did not glorify God. Those who were not thankful, and did not like to retain God in their knowledge. Their minds are locked, so to speak. It is not possible for them to return without the help of the Holy Spirit. They keep going into the works of the flesh so far that there seems to be no return. They enjoy the works of the flesh and have no intention of returning to God.

We need to understand that these conditions did not happen over-night. They don't go from being a good Christian to a reprobate mind in a matter of only a few days, or even a few weeks. They continue in the works of the flesh until the Holy Spirit knows they have no intentions of returning to a sound mind, or a right mind that wants to be with Jesus.

Satan is behind all works of the flesh (Eph. 2:2,3). He keeps thoughts coming to the minds of those who will receive them, day and night. This continues until he gets them to accept them as a part of their life, and way of living. He will help them with thoughts of self-justification, and self-righteousness in what they are doing.

If thoughts of those things which are not pleasing to God are not brought under subjection, and cast out, Satan will increase his pressure until there is no resistance. Once Christians no longer resist the thoughts Satan puts in their minds, the Holy Spirit has no alternative but to give them over to the devil. Not because He wants to but because He has no choice, they made their decision of their own free will.

Let me give an example of someone who has not resisted the devil and “has possibly gone too far,” inasmuch as the Holy Spirit “has possibly” given her over to a reprobate mind. This is something I heard from someone well respected in the body of Christ. I did not speak to this person myself.

It was told that this well respected person went down the streets in his home town and there he met a young girl who he had known years ago. He tried to witness to her to return to the LORD and attend church again. She said to him, something like this, “tell others not to get involved the way I did, for now I know the LORD will not receive me back.” He tried to convince her that the LORD

would receive her back if she would come. She said to him, “look up the block! See that woman standing up there! That is my wife, we are married!” (A woman married to a woman (Rom. 1:26)). She said, “I cannot return to the LORD!” Then she walked away.

It is very possible that the Holy Spirit has turned her over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not right, even knowing it will only lead to destruction.

It’s not a good thing to be given over to the devil, especially if it is the Holy Spirit that gives someone over to the devil. For, the Holy Spirit is the only One that can bring a person out of the hands of the devil. We do not have the power of our own ability to release ourselves from the powers of darkness. God must do it. If the Holy Spirit releases our minds to the devil, “there may be no return.” For the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of repentance. Without Him we are lost!

The Gospel of Mark talks about the work of Satan to draw us away from God. In Mark 4:14-20 is the parable of the sower. Satan does not wait until we have gone so far that the Holy Spirit will not work in our lives any longer. Satan starts immediately, when we hear the Word of God; he comes to steal the Word before it can become effective in our lives (Mark 4:15).

If Satan cannot steal the Word in the beginning, he will continue to try other means to keep us from doing the will of God. Satan will send affliction or persecution for the Word's sake, and if we are not careful, we will be offended (Mark 4:16,17).

If that doesn’t stop us, Satan will bring to our attention, the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things to choke the Word (Mark 4:18,19). Satan will not stop “unless we stop him.”

Many times, the only way to stop the devil is constantly, “praying in the Spirit” and “reading the Word of God” over and over and over. We must continue to “fight the good fight of faith” until the end (1 Tim. 6:12). Don’t let the love of God grow cold (Matt. 24:12). Don’t give any place for the devil (Eph. 4:27).

Christians, don’t be deceived by the enemy. We become deceived when we walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit.

Is there hope for those who have gone astray, walking after the flesh to where their mind is no longer normal? Yes, there is always hope while they still have a body of flesh and bones. God is merciful, long suffering, and not willing that any should perish.

Return unto Him, and He will abundantly pardon. You should reject all thoughts that are not pleasing to God. Come out from among those who do not walk in the Light. Repent, confess your sins and He will cleanse you from all unrighteousness! Don’t give the devil any place in your life, live unto God in holiness and righteousness. He loves you just as much as He loves His Son. Repent, confess, and walk in the Light.

## A STRONG DELUSION

What about Christians in the ministry? In 2 Thessalonians, Chapter two, it tells of another work of the flesh that could cause God ***“to send a strong delusion that they would believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*** When people in the ministry enter into spiritual operations from their natural mind and do not repent, God could send them a strong delusion that they believe a lie unto their own damnation. Christians are not taught to operate in spiritual operations from their natural mind. We have the mind of Christ, this is where a Christian’s spiritual operations should come from. In 1 Peter 4:11, it says, **“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”**The Modern King James Version says, **“If anyone speaks, let it be as the words of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as of the ability which God gives, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory, and the might forever and ever. Amen.”**

All the gifts of the Spirit are to operate from the spirit of man by the Holy Spirit “as the Holy Spirit wills” (1 Cor. 12:7-11). Spiritual operations from the natural mind are like those of witchcraft (1 Sam. 28:7). Therefore, if those who have operated in spiritual operations from their natural mind do not repent, God could send them a strong delusion that they believe a lie unto their own damnation.

This is an area whereby many “SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIANS” have entered, not knowing it is not of God but of the devil. *“That they should fall away from the faith and enter into this trap of Satan.”*

Many who have fallen into this trap of the devil, operating from their natural minds in “personal prophecies,” speaking “great sounding words that entice the minds of those they speak to” saying, God told them, when it was not God. Most of these “personal prophecies never come to pass.” The LORD spoke through Moses in Deuteronomy 18:22, **“When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”**Those who continue to speak that which the LORD did not give them get off into error, following the thoughts of their minds, rather than the leading of the Spirit from their spirit. If they continue, they could be given a strong delusion, that they believe this unto their own destruction.

Many in the ministry, who have done this, no longer trust in the LORD as their source for everything. You will find them sending out letters to everyone they can, asking them to send money to help them do their ministry work. They don’t pray and seek the LORD for their finances, but rather prey upon other Christians for their support. They “by pass the LORD,” and go the same route as all other religious organizations of the world. They find all sorts of ways to raise money to do their work. They operate from their natural mind, not from the mind of Christ, which is in them. They have fallen away from the faith, and resorted to the natural mind of the flesh. Some of them even

raise themselves up, as though they are God.

In 2 Thessalonians, Chapter two, we are given wisdom concerning these last days of great deception. Yet, because of poor translations of this chapter, many are deceived. There is a great falling away within the body of Christ today, and it increases as we draw closer to the last days. The bases for Paul's revelation is found in Isaiah 14:12-20. Satan, who at one time was Lucifer, and was cast out of the third heavens, is now working within the body of Christ to raise himself up as though he is God.

Satan is working within the body of Christ just for that purpose. He uses many Spirit-filled Christians to do his talking, and to represent him in disguise, thinking there is nothing wrong with what they are doing. They make themselves as though they are God, insomuch as they use all sorts of deceitfulness to gain a position within the body of Christ. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9,10 it says,

**Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,  
And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**

If you will study the original writings, you will notice that this is in "the plural form," not "the singular." Therefore, it is not speaking of one individual, but many individuals sitting in high places in the churches today. In general, those who have entered into this deceitfulness have become a part of what is called "the commercialized church," a system where there is more talk about money than the gospel.

This seems to be only the starting point toward this strong delusion, for they continue on building their own empire, raising themselves up as someone great. Drawing attention to themselves and entering into false operations of the Spirit. They come with great lying signs and wonders, prophesying lies and all sorts of deception. They raise up people rather than Jesus. They take the glory for themselves, that should be given to Jesus. They become as God, in their positions and draw many into following them, rather than following Jesus.

Some have started their own ministry, doing that which they think is of God; but without the leading of the Holy Spirit. They enter into churches and even starting their own churches, and it is all of the flesh, not of the Holy Spirit. Even though, at one time they did follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, but they left the leading of the Holy Spirit to go on their own and became recognized among Christians as someone great. They want attention in the ministry, and they go to extremes to get attention.

I know of an individual who started his own church. He taught faith for material gain. He used the same Scripture verse many of the faith ministries use today. He promised his congregation that if they would give, God would bless them, even to the one-hundred fold. He preached "faith for finances and gain," over and over. He stressed giving into his ministry for gain. As the years went by, he began to raise himself up, having the congregation lay their tithes and offering at his feet as

he stood by the altar.

His congregation grew larger and larger over the years. The Christians attending his church liked what they heard him teach. They enjoyed hearing faith for material gain. Faith for more money. (Christians need to be aware of this teaching, it is symbolic of the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-21). Jesus said in Revelation 3:15-17,

**I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.**

**Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

As this pastors congregation grew he began taking up offerings to purchase property to build a church building. He had the congregation lay their offering at his feet. One individual, a woman drew out her savings (about \$30,000) and laid it at his feet. Over a period of time he collected over \$600,000.

Instead of purchasing land and building a church, he put a small down payment toward an existing church, which was up for sale. He mortgaged the rest through a local bank.

During the mean time, he was in the process of obtaining an expensive home for himself in another state. When his home was ready for him to move in, he took the remaining money the congregation gave for the new church and left the state. A few of his special members went with him to start another church in that state.

The congregation that gave all the money for a new church was left with “literally nothing.” They had no pastor. They had no money. The bank foreclosed on the church that he put the down payment on. All their hopes, and all their dreams went down the tube. They had nothing to show for all their giving.

Is this the mind of Christ? Certainly not! Would Jesus do what that man did? Certainly not! The mind of Christ should portray that of Jesus Himself. In Philippians 2:5-8, Paul gives us an example of the mind of Christ. We need to be aware of what is happening within the Churches today. If it is not the mind of Christ in operation, then there is another spirit involved.

It seems that when a person called into the ministry of pastor does not portray the mind of Christ, and uses the position of pastor for personal gain, there is something wrong. If they continue on seeking personal gain, and exalting themselves as though they are God, they could be given a strong delusion and believe a lie unto their own destruction.

One of the signs that identify those who are deceived by Satan are false prophecies (prophecies that never come to pass). Prophecies that raise up individuals as though they are special

to God and have a great anointing.

There is no “great anointing” within the body of Christ. There is only One anointing, and that is the anointing of the Holy Spirit which is in and upon every individual that is baptized in the Holy Spirit. The anointing varies as the Holy Spirit wills, not as man wills. The anointing comes and leaves at the Holy Spirit’s choosing, not by the will of man. Everyone has an anointing for some particular duty within the body of Christ, and none is greater than the other.

Paul addressed a similar situation in 1 Corinthians, Chapter Eleven. There were many Christians sickly and many had already died because they did not discern the LORD’S body. Go back into verses eighteen through twenty-one and you will see the cause of sickness and premature death within the church. When Christians exalt themselves and raise up others as though they are better than the very least within the body of Christ, they cause heresies and divisions. Heresies and divisions are works of the devil. When the works of the devil are exalted within the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit could send a strong delusion, that those who do such things would believe a lie unto their own destruction.

How can anyone who thinks they have entered into this position set themselves free? They must recognize their sins, repent, and turn to God for deliverance. James said, “**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you**” (James 4:7). Only God can deliver such, that they might be saved. This applies to all sorts of disobedience that leads to a reprobate mind or a strong delusion in believing a lie.

When Christians think they are in control of their mind, they have been deceived. We do not have “total control” of our mind. Therefore, the Scripture tells us, “walk after the Spirit.” When we walk after the Spirit we put the Holy Spirit in control of our mind. When the Holy Spirit is in control of our mind, we are not in control and neither is the devil. If the Holy Spirit is not in control of our mind the devil is and we don’t know it, neither do we understand it. Don’t ever think you have complete control of your mind, or you will be deceived.

If you are born again of the Word and the Spirit, you have the mind of Christ. It dwells in your spirit where the fulness of the Godhead dwells. If you walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh you can tap into “the mind of Christ within you.” It’s all up to each individual Christian if they will “walk after the Spirit” or not.

Walking after the Spirit is “following the Holy Spirit, putting the Holy Spirit in control and releasing your own will to the will of God.” This cannot be done without first submitting ourselves to the Word of God. Everything the Holy Spirit does is in total agreement with the written Word of God. Do as Jesus said, “**I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father**” (John 5:30).

If we do our own will, then we are on our own, and God cannot help us. It is only when we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit that we can do the will of God. WE NEED THE MIND OF CHRIST TO DO THE WILL OF GOD. Philippians 2:1-12, gives a description of the mind of Christ.

We need to study the mind of Christ and apply it to our lives daily.

Yet, we must understand the New Covenant. In the New Covenant **“the just shall live by faith”** (Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, Heb. 10:38). The works of the flesh are like the Ten Commandments in the Old Covenant, “thou shall not do...!” **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (1 John 1:9). Even then, we have 1 John 2:1,2,

**My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:  
And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**

Don't let the devil keep you under condemnation. In 1 John 1:7 it says, **“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”** Jesus said, **“I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life”** (John 8:12). Then 1 John 2:3 says, **“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”**

Christians must learn to walk by faith and not by sight. We must understand what Jesus did for us on the Cross. We must follow Jesus, and become a light to the world, a light that cannot be hid, nor put out. Don't let the devil get you into the works of the flesh where your light cannot shine in the darkness and overcome the sins of this world.

Righteousness doesn't come by what we do, or did. Righteousness comes by what Jesus did for us. **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (2 Cor. 5:21). We will never become the righteousness of God by what we do, it can only come by what Jesus did for us on the Cross.

Righteousness is imputed upon those who believe. Romans 4:3-8 says,  
**For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.  
Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.  
But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.  
Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,  
Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.  
Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**

Romans 6:14-16 says,  
**For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.  
What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God**

**forbid.**

**Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

Therefore, **“the just shall live by faith.”** Walk in the light, as He is in the Light and sin shall have no power over us.

Hebrews 11:1 says, **“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”** Hebrews 11:6 says, **“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”** Hebrews 10:38 says, **“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”**

So, let us not draw back, but walk in the light as Jesus is the Light, and in Him is no darkness at all... We should daily, spend time in the Word and in prayer that Satan can have no place in our life.

If you have not become born again by making Jesus Christ the LORD of your life you can do so NOW. In John 1:11-12 it says, **“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:”** Ask Jesus to come into your life and become your LORD!

SAY A PRAYER LIKE THIS, OUT LOUD:

*“Lord Jesus, I know that You are the Son of God. I know that You died on the cross for me. I know that God raised You from the dead. Jesus, I ask You to come into my life, live Your life in me. Jesus, let Your will be done in me; let the will of God be done in my life as it was in Your life. I surrender myself to You, Jesus! You lead me by Your Spirit and I will follow to the best of my ability. I will live for You all the days of my life, as You lead me by Your Spirit.*

*Jesus, forgive me of all my sins, wash me clean in Your blood; that I may be the righteousness of God in You. Thank You, Jesus!”*

# LIVING THE LIFE

In John 3:6 Jesus said, **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.** If anyone knows the truth it is Jesus, for He is the Truth. When we were born into this world we were born of the flesh. We all came into this world with what is referred to as “flesh.” **“That which is born of the flesh is flesh”** (John 3:6). Many times throughout the New Testament it calls our natural man “flesh.”

“Walking after the flesh is walking according to our natural understanding” (Rom. 8:1-7). Walking after the Spirit is “being led by the Holy Spirit, not according to our natural understanding but according to the Word of God” (Rom. 8:1-39). If the Holy Spirit is not in control of what we say and what we do, we are not walking after the Spirit.

When Jesus said, **“that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,”** He DID NOT SAY “man is a spirit”! The Scripture is very clear, “Man is a living soul.” That which was born of the Spirit is not of the flesh, but of God the Holy Spirit. That does not mean “man is a spirit”! That means what the Scripture teaches, “our living soul is translated from the flesh into the new created spirit, “the Spirit of Christ.” We are still “a living soul,” but, as the Scripture says, **“ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”**

The living souls of those who are not born again are still in Adam. The living souls of the born again Christian’s are in Christ. **“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive”** (1 Cor. 15:22). Learn who we are in Christ, don’t be deceived by those who teach from their natural mind!

The natural man was born of man, by the will of man. The new creature in Christ is born again of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. The Holy Spirit took the Word of God and caused a new birth within our new spirit. In our new spirit, we are a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Because we are still in this world, and that which is born of the Spirit is a new creature in Christ Jesus, we must present our old bodies of flesh and bones a living sacrifice unto God (Rom. 12:1). We must still renew our old mind on the Word of God (Rom. 12:2). The outward man will perish, but the inward man must be renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16). The day will come when this is complete. That is, when **“this corruption shall put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality”** (1 Cor. 15:52-54), then all things will be complete (Heb. 2:8,9).

Jesus lived the life of the Spirit. He walked after the Holy Spirit, not the outward man of the flesh. Jesus was a Man, born of a woman, and lived in this world just as you and I. But Jesus did not do the will of the flesh, He did only the will of God the Father. Therefore, when Satan came to Jesus he had nothing on Him, Jesus was without sin!

While Jesus walked this earth, in His last three and one-half years, He was led by the Spirit

and “began” to teach us how to live on this earth, seeking to do the will of God the Father.

After He went to be with the Father He sent the Holy Spirit to teach us all things (Acts 1:1,2). The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the New Testament to write the WORD OF GOD, which He would use to confirm in our lives. The Holy Spirit confirms the Word of God.

Jesus said to His disciples in John 16:12,13,

**I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.**

**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.**

Jesus taught all He could to His disciples before His death and resurrection. Then He sent the Holy Spirit to finish what He began to teach. The Holy Spirit used the apostle Paul more than the others in writing what we have today, yet all that is written in the New Testament is important.

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3,

**And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.**

**I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.**

**For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?**

Much of the writings of the apostle Paul are written to baby Christians. They are for those who walk after the flesh and not after the Holy Spirit. When we are led by the Holy Spirit the things of this world are not important, only the things that please the Father are important.

Most of the body of Christ is made up of baby Christians, many of these are standing in the offices of pastors, teachers, evangelists, prophets, and even apostles. They took these titles upon themselves, but they are still babes in Christ. How do you know? Look a verse three, **“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?”** When they love the world and the things of this world, the love of the Father is not in them (1 John 2:15,16). If the love of the Father is not in them, are they not still carnal?

Let us, therefore, go on to perfection, renewing our minds on the Word of God, doing those things which are pleasing to our Father in heaven. In renewing our mind, we must search the Scriptures for the meat of the Word of God, not just the milk **“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe”** (Heb. 5:13).

In Romans 7:22, the apostle Paul wrote, **“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.”** There is an inward man, where the mind of Christ is located. The inward man does delight in the law of God. The law of God is not “the Ten Commandments.” But those who live by “the law

of God within them” will not go against the Ten Commandments, nor any other commandments given by God. The letter of the law brings us to death, but the Spirit brings life in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 3:6). **“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”** (Rom. 8:2).

The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus lives by the Word of God, **“by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”** (Matt. 4:4). What the Word of God says is what we live by. Not by our natural mind, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit within us. Everything we say, everything we do should be by the leading of the Holy Spirit within us.

By the Spirit of God, Peter wrote in 1 Peter 4:11, **“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”** This is the will of God for His Children.

The Holy Spirit is within us, therefore, by the help of the Holy Spirit, **“we walk by faith and not by sight,”** we **“speak those things that be not as though they were.”** This is not by the natural mind, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit within us. In 1 John 2:27 it tells us, **“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”**

As we abide in the Holy Spirit, He leads us into all truth. Not truth as the world understands truth, but the Truth of God which comes from our spirit, not our natural mind of the flesh. We walk in the newness of life, led by the Holy Spirit, not in the ways of man led by the natural mind.

Everything we say or do, must be by faith, not by sight. And certainly, not by the natural mind operating in spiritual experiences. We are born again of the Spirit (John 3:6). We are not in the flesh but in the Spirit (Rom. 8:9). We are a new creature “in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17). We operate from our spirit, not our natural mind. The mind of Christ dwells in our new creature in Christ, whereby we live and move and have our being.

Satan has a counterfeit operation from the natural minds of people, including Spirit-filled Christians. There are many false operations of spiritual things going on within the body of Christ. You don’t need to be a part of them. For there is prepared for you a True and Living way, walking after the Holy Spirit from within your new creature in Christ Jesus, (your inward man of the spirit, not your outward man of the flesh).

Now, **“the just shall live by faith,”** not by spiritual operations from the natural minds of those who think they are somebody, or whosoever they think they are! Walk after the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. You have the mind of Christ, now learn how to use it in place of your natural mind of the flesh.