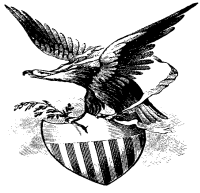


# Light Brings Salt

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## Iron Range Bible Church

*Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God*



### Mental Attitude

#### Stability in the Christian Life

Pastor John Griffith

As a believer progresses in his or her Christian life, they experience many profound changes in his thinking. His standards change gradually but radically; his frame of reference changes; his mental attitude soon becomes very different from what it once was. His previous way of thinking is replaced by the "mind of Christ" - God's viewpoint is becoming his own.

The greatest occupational hazard faced by a Christian is the failure to grow in Christ. Persistent personal sin carried on without repentance and confession keeps the Christian out of fellowship with the Lord and hinders the work of the Holy Spirit in the life.

The normal Christian life is a supernatural life. This life cannot be lived apart from the consistent intake of spiritual food, the sustenance which comes with the study of the Bible accompanied by the continuous empowering and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Inattention to the teaching of the Word of God concerning the mechanics of daily Christian living results in failure to grow in Christ. The believer who will not overcome these problems will not be able to enjoy the benefits and blessings of the Christian life, and he will certainly not be productive as a child of God.

This article reviews several factors relating to the subject of the believer's mental attitude. First, we note several categories of mental attitude sin which are the result of "not thinking truth". Then

we see the methods by which God arranges for human viewpoint thinking to be replaced with divine viewpoint thinking. This study will also show some of the important results in the life of the Christian who develops a godly mental attitude.

#### THE SIN OF "NOT THINKING GRACE"

A Christian decides many times every day whether he will follow God's plan for his life. In decisions great or small he expresses either his dependence on the Lord or his desire to be independent of God's direction. A believer has access to the perfect plan of God for his life, a plan which has certain predetermined divine standards by which every situation can be measured, by which every decisive opportunity can be judged. Many promises and blessings are available for use by the person who orders his life according to the patterns laid out in the Bible.

The person who is not positive to the plan of God, and who would apply his own human standards to life situations, does not operate by divine standards. He becomes involved in a variety of mental attitude sin problems stemming from his original decision to be independent of God. His life takes on the characteristics of one who does not "think Grace".

Grace is that characteristic of God by which He is able to relate to the human race based on the Cross work of Christ and which causes Him to provide for man's needs for time and eternity. The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the Cross is the Work which made it possible for God to view every one who believes in Christ as free from the guilt and penalty of sin and as an object of God's Grace provisions.

Failure to order one's thinking according to Grace involves several aspects of mental attitude sin, including the following :

- A spirit of pride -- this is an exalted feeling based on personal success or position, or based on good training or education, on personal appearance, or on some natural gift or ability. Sinful pride is an inner feeling of self-importance which does not take into account God's provision of every resource and quality which goes into one's human traits and capabilities.

Love of, or desire for, human approbation and praise -- this is a secret fondness for being noticed and recognized. It is a love of supremacy, or it is the drawing of attention to oneself by various types of exhibitionism or by spiritual one-upmanship.

Self will -- this is the concept of the stubborn of being unteachable , or implacability. Self will is a disposition to be argumentative, harsh, bitter, which causes one to be a "nit picker" or critical in the extreme, or to mind the business of others, or to fail to recognize the rights and privacy of others.

Sinful reaction to social pressures -- these are the sins of anger, impatience, or of having a sensitive nature. There is often resentment and retaliation when disapproved or contradicted. This area of sin generates jealousy, sour grapes, envy, and the accompanying bitterness, hatred, carrying of grudges, revenge tactics, and so forth.

Magnifying the faults and failings of others while emphasizing one's own virtues.

Negative disposition -- this is peevishness, a fretful disposition, one that loves to be coaxed and honored. It is a dishonest, deceitful attitude. It is a disposition that tends toward discouragement and despondency under pressure along with the attempt to solve one's problems by hysteria and tantrums.

Apathy -- this sin is that of indifference to doctrine and to the Word of God in general. It is indifferences to the lost condition of

unbelievers or to the carnal condition of other believers.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BELIEVER'S MENTAL ATTITUDE

The true character of a believer in Jesus Christ is determined by his mental attitude. Prov. 23:7, "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he". See also 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:1; Heb. 12:3; Col. 3:1,2; 1 Cor. 2:16; 2 Cor. 10:4,5.

A Christian's mental attitude is not always apparent in his actions, but God always knows perfectly what a person is thinking. Heb. 4:12,13; Prov. 21:2. The following are examples of mental attitude thinking.

Worldliness is a mental attitude. Worldliness is not the doing of something wrong; it is the thinking which takes place independently of God's viewpoint. The remedy to the problem of worldliness is not in turning over a new leaf. It is a change in thinking rather than a change in activity. Divine viewpoint must replace human viewpoint before a change in character can be expected. One can have an outward life which appears good, yet be filled with mental attitude sins. Col. 3:2; James 4:4.

True Christian inner peace is a mental attitude. It is the relaxed mental state which enables one to enjoy the Christian life regardless of people or outward circumstances. With a good mental attitude, the believer can be joyful, relaxed, and can even enjoy the battle.

Mental stability is the result of thinking from a proper frame of reference, that is, Biblical thinking. The Christian who has mental fear, who is a chronic worrier, who cannot think clearly under pressure, who blames others for his problems, who cannot make correct decisions -- that believer is unstable. His emotions interfere with his thinking. Since emotion always follows thinking, emotional instability will always follow from incorrect (HVP) thinking. But God's Plan of Grace leads to rock-solid mental and emotional stability.

## MAN'S IDEAS VS. DIVINE VIEWPOINT

Thinking requires words - vocabulary. Divine thinking requires divine vocabulary. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." Under any kind of spiritual pressure, human vocabulary, or human thinking, is not adequate. Only God's words can give the ability to think correctly under pressure. The Christian's ability to think correctly that is to think God's thoughts after Him is based on how much wisdom and understanding of truth is in the soul of the believer. All of which must be believed.

The Christian is commanded to have a new mental attitude. Col. 3:1,2; Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 10:4,5; 1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5.

The warfare between two viewpoints in the believer's soul must be fought from within, first by knowledge of doctrine, and then by the application of truth to the life. 2 Tim. 2:15-17; Col 1:9-11.

Every believer has a mind which is capable of looking at life from God's point of view. Rom. 1:18 ff.

Mental attitude divine viewpoint is obtained only through Bible study accompanied by the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Christian can be only be "transformed by the renewing of the mind" through study, knowledge, and living out of the truth from the Word. By this means his decisions and actions are most likely to be in agreement with Bible principles. And this is the only sure sign of Christian maturity and that we're living the Christian life.

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Lawmakers pass redefinition of 'sex'  
[Excerpts]

Bill threatens references to 'mom,' 'dad' at school

In a move with national implications, California's state Senate passed a bill that establishes a new definition for "sex," threatens references to "mom" and "dad" and could restrict the presentation of scientific evidence to students.

The plan, SB 777, which actually would turn the state into a promoter for the homosexual lifestyle, is much like a bill approved by lawmakers last year but vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who said adequate legal protections against discrimination already existed.

The newest legislation, sponsored by state Sen. Sheila James Kuehl, D-Santa Monica, a lesbian, would ban textbooks, references, teaching aids, activities, events, discussions, posters, announcements, workbooks and anything else within the public school system from anything that "reflects or promotes bias against" homosexuality, transgenders, bisexuals or those with "perceived" gender issues.

References to a "mother" and "father" in any school text appear to be threatened, because they could be interpreted as "reflecting" a bias against the "Partner 1" and "Partner 2" of same-sex lifestyles.

Randy Thomasson, of the Campaign for Children and Families, <http://www.savecalifornia.com> said it's just wrong.

"SB 777 requires textbooks, instructional materials and school-sponsored activities to positively portray cross-dressing, sex-change operations, homosexual 'marriages' and all aspects of homosexuality and bisexuality, including so-called 'gay history,'" he said. "Silence on these sexual lifestyles will not be allowed."

The current education code's definition of "sex," which reads, "'Sex' means the biological condition or quality of being a male or female human being," is eliminated. The new "gender" definition considers "a person's gender identity and gender related appearance and behavior whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's assigned sex at birth."

The new mandate would be enforced by the

attorneys of the California Department of Education, which would sue school districts that don't comply, Thomasson noted.

The Los Angeles district already has implemented many of the proposals in the legislation. Among the most obvious changes:

- \* Words such as "mom" and "dad" and husband" and "wife" would have to be edited from all texts.
- \* Cheerleading and sports teams would have to be gender-neutral.
- \* Prom kings and queens would be banned, or if featured, would have to be gender neutral so that the king could be female and the queen male.
- \* Gender-neutral bathrooms could be required for those confused about their gender identity.
- \* A male who believes he really is female would be allowed into the women's restroom, and a woman believing herself a male would be allowed into a men's room.
- \* Even scientific information, such as statistics showing AIDS rates in the homosexual community or statistics relating to births or deaths among various cultural groups, could be banned.

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### News update of the Week

Russia and Iran are conducting proxy wars against the United States and Israel by funding, equipping and by providing strategy to terrorists who ultimately fight in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Israel. Russia is complicit in the proxy wars because Iran is by far and away one of the largest arms customers of Russia, which booked an estimated \$18 billion dollars in arms contracts in 2005, Iran accounting for \$4 billion of that amount, Syria another \$2 billion, and Sudan \$400 million, according to Russian President Vladimir Putin. In 2006, Russia actually exported \$8 billion in weapons worldwide, much of it going to Iran, Syria, and Venezuela.

Russian technology and weapons expertise is now showing itself in the bodies of American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, and in Israeli citizens from terrorist attacks by Hezbollah and Hamas. In fact, as of April 2006 Putin

said that Russia continued to sell small arms to Hamas. At the same time, Iranian-made explosives are also the cause of death among American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. ABC News reports that NATO officials have caught Iran red-handed, shipping heavy arms, C4 explosives and advanced roadside bombs to the Taliban for use against NATO forces, in what the officials say is a dramatic escalation of Iran's proxy war against the United States and Great Britain.

In addition, DEBKA file reports that Moscow is pressuring the U.S. to close down its Manas base in the former Soviet satellite of Kyrgyzstan, which is the launching facility for operations in Afghanistan against the Taliban. Russia is strategically warring against the U.S. and Israel by providing weapons to Syria and Iran and by its political maneuvering in diplomatic circles and at the United Nations Security Council. Iran is not only shipping weapons to terrorists in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, and Afghanistan, but also infiltrating many of these areas with its special clandestine Quad Force.

The Russian-Iranian proxy war has resulted in American troops being killed each day, and Syria, Hezbollah, and Hamas are preparing to launch a major assault on Israel. The Russian-Iranian relationship sets a historic precedent since Russia and Iran have never allied since the establishment of Israel as a nation in 1948. The Biblical prophecy in Ezekiel 38:4,5 speaks of Gog, modern day Russia, coming against Israel, "I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army...Persia, Ethiopia and Libya are with them." Russia has armed Sudan, Egypt and Libya, which accounts for all of northern Africa at the time of the prophecy. Now Iran and Russia are together. Watch for what is next.  
(Some of the converging conditions for what we know will occur in the Tribulation. P/T)